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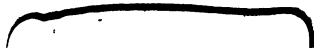


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**JACK HARDIN'S ARABIAN  
NIGHTS**





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**"RIORDAN WAS A GLUTTON FOR STORIES"**

JACK HARDIN'S

RENDERING OF THE

# Arabian Nights

Being a New *Translation* in  
UP-TO-DATE English

*With Wise Comments, Explanations, &c., by this Eminent Linguist*

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By J. W. SCOTT

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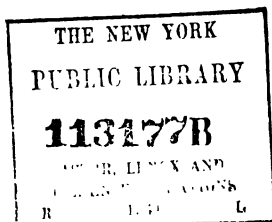
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# JACK HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS

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## WHEN THE ORIENT WAS IT

**T**HE gang had switched the subject to books, when Jack Hardin cut in and took the floor. Jack wasn't much for literature, but once in awhile he found something that suited him, and then he talked extensively. This was one of the times, and this is the song he sang:

Say, fellows, those "Entertainments;" they're all the money, I think. They've got pretty much everything I ever read skinned. I mean the "Arabian Nights." They beat the comics and the funny columns, and all that sort of a thing, at a walk. I read them

## HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS

when I was a kid, but I've been going them another heat lately.

I suppose you fellows read them in the long gone. Remember how they came about? No? Forgotten? Well, I'll tell you how it was. It was this way:

In the old days when the Orient was It, there was a big Persian king whose name was Shah Riar or Roar or Riordan or something, and he had a brother named Zenan or Zebra, and he set him up in a side line as a sub-king, — King of Tartary, I think, — because he liked him a lot.

Ten years after Riordan put Zebra in business, he wanted to see him, and he sent him an invitation to come stay awhile and have a good time. Well, Zebra took up the bid, and after he got out on the road a day to go see Riordan, he got soft for his queen, and he thought he'd go back and give her another squeeze. So he got on his horse in the night and left his outfit and skipped back.

When he reached the palace he found the queen chinning with a skate on the veranda,

## WHEN THE ORIENT WAS IT

and when he sees the guy with his wife, Zebra gets wild, and he pulls out his skimiter and cuts him in two. Then he chops the dame up and blows back to his party and goes on to Riordan's town.

Riordan was a hot shah for wealth and affluence, and he rode out with all the main guys of the court, the grand vizier and the keeper of the seal and the past grand chamberlain and all the rest of the old boys, and gave Zebra a swell reception; and at the palace he ordered big eats and drinks and musical soirées and made the place howl, so Zebra would have a good time.

But Zebra felt pretty sick over his queen, and he moped around and did the death's-head-at-the-feast act most of the time; and when Riordan and the vizier and the balance of the push went on the swell hunts fixed up for his entertainment, he'd sit at the palace by himself and feel bad.

One day, when Riordan and his outfit went after bear, Zebra was mooning in his room, looking out of the window; and after Riordan

## HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS

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got out of sight, he sees the queen and ten of her swell ladies float into the garden. Ten skates in masks waltzed in after them, and when the queen clapped her hands, those guys shook their masks and joined the ladies, and another plug fell out of a tree and blew up to the queen. Then there were doings — dancing and revelry and frivolous conduct.

Well, when Zebra saw that, he felt better. He saw Riordan was in the same boat he was, and he chirked up right away; and he was so gay when Riordan got back that Riordan wanted to know what brought him to. Zebra hung out a long time, but finally he joined the Tattle Club and squealed on the queen and her ladies, and then he told Riordan about himself.

Riordan was disgusted all right when he heard the news. He was so sore he says to Zebra:

“Say, you and I are pikers; we got no business here. Let’s blow this whole game, and go on the road hoboing. I’m sick of the world, anyway.”

Zebra said he’d go with him, provided he’d come back if they found some fellow worse stuck

## WHEN THE ORIENT WAS IT

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than they were. So they went, jumping the palace on the quiet.

They hoofed it a long ways, and one day they came to a tree by the seashore and sat down under it to rest their faces and hands. Pretty soon a black pillar or column or something came up out of the sea and started for the shore. When they saw the column coming, they climbed a tree, soon; 'cause they didn't know what kind of a game it was. Well, when it got near they saw it was one of those genii, people were suckers enough to believe in those times. The genie was a big black mug, and he had a glass box with steel locks to it on his head. He put the box down at the foot of a tree, and Riordan and Zebra thought it was all off with them.

But the genie didn't see them; and he opened a box, and the swellest kind of a dame stepped out. She was one of these haughty dames, and a goodlooker for fair, and after the genie said he was sleepy and that he'd loved her since he swiped her on her wedding-day, she sat down and he went to sleep with his head on her lap.

Then the dame spotted the boys in the tree,

## HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS

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and she ordered them to come off their perch. Riordan tried to get excused, but she threatened to wake the genie and have them skimitered, and they fell into line. She was the genie's wife fine and proper, but when the boys got down, she put his head on the ground and made love to them like an old maid in a comedy. She already had ninety-eight fellows on the string, she told Riordan and Zebra, and she said they just completed the century.

She said the genie might lock her up in his glass box and keep her at his country-place at the bottom of the sea as much as he liked, but she'd do him just the same, and that he was a kind of Mollie boy to her, anyway, and that he'd look like thirty cents before she got through with him. When the talk sagged, she told Zebra and Riordan she was weary, and to go and sign with somebody else, and they ducked.

Well, when the boys had got away a bit, Riordan says, "Well, if a big slob of a demon like that gets the hooks thrown into him, we haven't so much of a kick. Let's go back to town."

## WHEN THE ORIENT WAS IT

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And they blew back to Riordan's palace, and he went into business again at the old stand.

But he was still sore, and he had the queen and the ten ladies and the eleven funny boys skimitered behind the ears, and then he set up the rule to marry a girl every day, and have her skimitered the next.

Maybe that didn't cause a rise in the price of girls. In about three years there were mighty few maidens fair left in the place. Most of them had lost their nuts, and the rest had hiked down the pike and taken to the woods. It began to look specially squally for the grand vizier, because he had to pony up one girl a day, whether the crop was good or not, or lose his nut. As I said, it commenced to look like a sad affair for him; and the people began to kick.

Well, right here the vizier's oldest daughter, Saryzade — that's as near as I can get to it — comes into the play. She was one of these wise girls that know their way through all the books, and can use their heads for further orders, and for looks, she was a peach.



## **HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS**

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She waltzes up to her dad, and says: "Pop, let me go up against this game. I've got a few cards up my sleeve I think'll take the trick and stop this run on girls."

When the old man heard that, he nearly fell dead, and the way he argued against the scheme was something pathetic. But he couldn't head the girl off. Saryzade was bound to have her way, just like all the other women. So he fell down after awhile and chased himself around to the sultan, and told him Saryzade was the next on the list.

When the sultan hears this, he says: "You're making a bad break here, Mike. I like you fine and daisy, but I'm no quitter in this girl business, and Saryzade will get the blue pencil like all the rest."

The vizier said: "I know. But you can't do anything with a fool woman, and Allah is Allah," or something of that sort, and so the deal went through.

The old vizier was specially strong against Saryzade's plan, because he was the monkey who worked the skimiter, and he knew he'd have to

## WHEN THE ORIENT WAS IT

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take her head off, if she didn't make good with her bluff.

But Saryzade walked the plank with Riordan that afternoon, and she spent the night in his palace. But she had fixed up a job with her sister Dinyzade, and in the morning, early, she pounded Riordan on the back and waked him out of his Rip Van Winkle, and, between weeps, gave him a lot of hot air about how it would break her young heart to die without bidding Diny a fond adieu. So the sultan sent for Diny, who was a pretty smooth article herself. Diny came, and, after weeping considerably on Saryzade's shirtwaist, asked Sary to spring one of her lovely fairy-stories for the last time, before they said a long farewell.

Springing fairy tales was Saryzade's long and hasty. She could unwind yarns till the cows came home. And Riordan being willing to do her that favor, as a last one on him, she opened up and told one of the stories you find in the book.

Well, when Riordan's office hours came, he had to skip, but the story was only half-done,

## HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS

and he wanted to hear how it came out. So he told Saryzade it was all right with her till the next day; and the vizier, who was hanging around outside with the undertaker, went and got a bun on, when he got the tip.

The next morning, Saryzade finished the yarn and started another, and she worked that graft for a thousand nights. Riordan was a glutton for stories; he never got enough. At the end of that time Saryzade had seven children — zwei twins and one triplets — and she hit Riordan for a pardon on account of the kids; and he pardoned her and told her she was the best thing he'd struck yet, and that she'd squared the woman trouble for him for good, and could keep her job as long as she wanted it.

And he pushed the button for the grand vizier, and when his nobs blew in, told him to give the mob the tip that the girl ordinance was repealed; and he gave his nobs a swell robe of some kind, and all the viziers and emirs and past grands and outside guards new overcoats with brass buttons, and ordered up a Fourth of July

## WHEN THE ORIENT WAS IT

celebration and paid the freight himself; and the people all got a skate on and were happy.

The stories that Saryzade told make up the book. Saryzade was a crackerjack story-teller and no mistake, and though I didn't find that vein when I read the entertainments as a kid, I think, as a humorist, she's got most of the alleged skinned to a fare ye well.

## STORY OF THE FISHERMAN

**T**HE story about that fisherman wasn't so bad. He was an old guy, and so poor he had a hard time getting three squares a day, and he had a wife and three kids to support. For some reason too deep for your uncle, he had a rule to pitch his nets in the sea only four times a day. One morning he went out fishing before daylight, and the first drag he made, he copped out a dead donkey. That made him pretty sore. Dead donks were a frost, and he was out one throw. He win out a lot of mud, the next throw, and he *was* sick, and he makes a howl about fortune.

"Here I am," says he, "hustling all day long and every day in the week; I got no other graft but this; and yet as hard as I rustle, I can't pay rent. A poor man has no chance.

## STORY OF THE FISHERMAN

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The smooth guys get all the tapioca, an' an honest citizen gets nit."

Then he throws again, and finds another gold-brick — stones, shells, and stuff. I guess he was pretty wild when he sees that. Three throws to the bad and nary fish.

When the sun came over the hill, he flopped down on his knees and prayed like all good Mussulmans, and after that he gave the Lord another song.

"Good Lord," says he, "you know I only flip the net four times a day, and I've only got one flip left. If I don't call the turn next throw, it's all off to Buffalo with me. Remember how you fixed up a boulevard through the sea for Moses, and kindly back the fish up to my fence."

Then he made his last pitch, and when he hauled the net in, he found a copper can in it.

"Good," he says, when he sees the can, "I'll hock this at the foundry, and go buy grub with the dough."

But the can had a lead cover with a seal on it, and first he pried the cover off with his

## HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS

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knife, and turned the can upside down to see what was in it. Nothing came out when he held it that way, but when he set it up on its bottom, it began to smoke. That's right. If you don't believe it, ask Saryzade; she was there. Well, the smoke went up in a big black column clean up to the sky, and the fisherman dropped back three or four ranks to avoid the crush, and you may say he was a little astonished.

When the smoke column got up where its top could tickle the toes of the cloudlets, and had got most of that district and a good deal of the sea under its coat, it got solid with itself and dressed up into a genie, twice as big as the Eiffel Tower. The fisherman took one peek at the genie, and then he started for the country. But the genie opened his mouth and stopped him. The genie says:

"Oh, Solomon, the greatest profit in the bunch, pardon. I'll never go against you again; you can hand me anything you want from now on."

"What's that, Mr. Hanna?" says the fisherman. "Solomon's been in the graveyard for

## STORY OF THE FISHERMAN

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centuries and centuries. What happened you? Who canned you? ”

“ Don’t throw any Mr. Hannas at me,” said the genie.

“ All right,” says the fisherman. “ I’ll call you anything you say. What’ll it be — Lucky Jim? ”

“ Don’t get gay, Mike, for I’m going to kill you. See? ” the genie said then.

“ What for? ” the fisherman asked him. “ I never did anything to you, and didn’t I just turn you loose — Mr. Johnson? Has that escaped your memory already? ”

“ No, it hasn’t; there’s nothing the matter with my memory,” said the genie. “ But I’m going to kill you just as sure. But I’ll do you one favor.”

“ What favor? ” said the fisherman.

“ Well, you can select your own way to croak,” says the genie.

“ Thanks,” the fisherman said. “ But I’d like to know what you’re going to slaughter me for when I never even saw you before.”

“ Well, I’ll tell you,” the genie said. “ It’s



## HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS

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just like this: I been in that can a long time. You know old King Solomon, old King David's son? Well, he got sore on some of my curves when I was going the pace, and he told me to come be a good boy and do as he said. I told him nit, and put up my dukes and said I'd take him on a bit if he felt strong and well. The result was he beat me out and put me in that can. I could have got out easy, but he put his seal on the cover and that hoodooed me. After he got me canned, he had a scab genie throw the can into the sea.

"Say, maybe you think it wasn't slow in that can. Talk about a dull time. I'd been up against hard things before, but I'll give you a hunch, that lifted the rag. And the bat cave isn't in it for gloom.

"Well, the first century I was in that can, I took an oath that I'd load the man down with all kinds of money who turned me loose; but nobody cut in to give me a lift. In the second, I swore to cough up all the treasures of the earth to the guy who let me out; but there wasn't a leaf stirring, and I began to

## STORY OF THE FISHERMAN

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think everybody was dead. In the third, I promised on my soul to make the man who freed me a high-up king, be his hired man as long as he lived, and give him three wishes a day; but never a piker came my way. Then I got hot. I swore if any fellow ever opened that can I'd put him under the daisies, but I'd let him choose his own way of crossing the river. Well, you're It, but you get that choice, so hurry."

The fisherman felt like a two-spot when the genie threw that at him. "I haven't the luck of a yellow dog," says he. "I've lived too late. See what I missed? If I'd lived in those first centuries and done this thing, I'd have had everything that's good and backed Solomon off the road. And now I'm dumped. But you ain't treating me right. How did I know you were canned up? And I wasn't on to the rules when I came into this game anyway. Besides that, you ought to consider that I took the lid off that pot and let you out; if I hadn't, you'd be at the bottom of the sea along with McGinty yet; you ought to remember that."

## HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS

"That's just the reason I'm going to do you, as I believe I remarked," said the genie.

"You're no gentleman to assassinate a man who gave you the boost I did," said the fisherman.

"Quit chewing the rag; you're only delaying the game. It's up to you, and you've got to take your medicine. Say what way," said the genie, getting anxious.

The fisherman saw he was up against it then, and he got a little white around the gills, but he remembered he'd brought his wits with him and that a long shot sometimes wins the money; and so he says to the genie, "Say, on the level, did you really come out of that can? It wouldn't take one of your hoofs; I don't see how you stowed your whole picture in it. On the seal of old man Solomon here, now, give it to me straight."

Dragging old Solomon in that way — according to Saryzade, and she knew — gave the fisherman a kind of hitch on the genie. It was as good as a "Cross your heart;" and he had to tell the truth.



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## STORY OF THE FISHERMAN

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“On the dead,” he says, “I was in that can.”

“Well, maybe,” says the fisherman, “but I’m from Missouri, and you’ll have to show me.”

“Well and good,” the genie says. “This isn’t much of a day for business, and I’ve nothing else to do.” And he shakes himself into smoke, and crams himself back into the can. When he gets inside, he hollers out: “Well, what do you think now?”

The fisherman puts his nose down to the can and hollers back: “Are you there?”

“Pretty much. Don’t it look that way?” says the genie.

“All right,” the fisherman says; “stay there.” And he slams the lid down on the bucket, and when he gets it screwed on good and plenty, he says, “Well, I guess that’ll hold you for awhile.”

When it hit the genie that he was caged again, he nearly went off his dip. He reared up and tried to buck the cover off, but Solomon’s seal held him down easy. That seal was a cuckoo.

After awhile he got back to his mind, and

## HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS

he tried hot air. "That was only a jolly I was giving you," he said to the fisherman.

"Yes; I guess so," said the fisherman. "But my jolly went yours one better, didn't it? Say, Tommy, what a Reuben ranchman you were to come in on this play. Take the advice of your Uncle Joseph: never stay in a short draw with less than boys. A few moments ago you were high, low, jack, and the game, and now you are nit. Say, you had a long roost in that jug? Well, you're elected for a second term. I hope you'll like your job better this season."

The genie argued like a lawyer and made the fisherman all kinds of promises to be good if he'd let him out, but the fisherman declined to receive any gold bricks.

"I'm going to heave you into the briny again, Tommy, and build a shack here on the beach, and appoint myself watchman and see that nobody else gets you again in the draw. If I understood you, it's a little slow down there?" the fisherman said.

When he heard that, the genie played his

## STORY OF THE FISHERMAN

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trump-card. He said he'd make the fisherman richer than Rockefeller if he'd let him go.

Well, the fisherman had a long think then, and finally he concluded he couldn't stand out against that. He argued with himself that there wasn't any show for a feed that day, anyway, as his four throws were gone, and he might as well take chance with the genie as not. He figured that when a man's on a tram and nary meal-tickets in his jeans, life isn't so much. So he swore the genie in all kinds of ways, and then took the lid off the bucket and turned him loose again.

When the genie gets on his pins he gives a stretch to get the curves out of his legs and says, "Come along," and he blows down the pike and over the hills, and pilots the fisherman to a valley where there was a lake; and the fisherman catches a lot of fish and sells them to the sultan and gets rich.



## THE FISHERMAN AND THE MAGIC LAKE

**I** DIDN'T tell you about the lake, did I, Charlie, where the fisherman who let the genie out of that can fished? Say, that was the greatest game that genie put the fisherman on to.

When he gets him up to the lake he says: "Here. Pitch your net in here and fish; and take the fish up to the sultan. But don't fish more than once a day or you'll meet with trouble. See?"

Then he gives the ground a kick with his heel and it opens and takes him in.

The fisherman flies his net then, and catches in four fishes the first twirl — one red, one white, one blue, and one yellow one. The bunch must have looked like the American flag with a gold fringe. Then he quits for that day, on the hunch he got from the genie, and blows into town

## THE MAGIC LAKE

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and springs the fish on the sultan. The sultan thought the fishes were all right; and he handed the fisherman four hundred plunks and sent the fishes down to the cook. The fisherman thought he was dreaming when he got that roll; he never had so many plunks before in his life. But he was a straight mug, and he went and laid in groceries for the family.

The cook fried the fishes, and when they were done on one side, gave them a flip over on the other. When she did that, there was an elegant time in the kitchen. The wall opened and a class A girl stepped out. She was a beaut for sure, and a swell dresser — flowered satin, diamond earrings, pearl necklace, and gold bracelets with rubies.

She had a rod in one duke, and she taps a fish on the nut and says twice, "Are you on your beat or not?" and every fish in the bunch lifts up his nose and says, "Sure. When you pay up we pungle; if you walk we mosey; whenever you say 'when' we drink," and a lot of fairy talk like that. Then she dumps the pan and blows back into the wall.

## HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS

The cook nearly fainted when she piped all that, and when she found the fishes were burned to cinders, she got a scare on because they were spoiled and couldn't be served to the sultan. The vizier floated into the kitchen about then, and she put him on to what happened.

The G. V. was one of these curious Charlies, and after he gave the sultan a con about how the fishes had got lost or something, he got some more from the fisherman the next day, and had them cooked to see what would happen, for himself.

Well, the swell dame came out of the wall again and repeated her act, and then the vizier went and gave the whole thing away to the sultan; and the sultan said he'd have to have another batch of fish and a front seat to the show; and the day after that the fisherman fetched four more and was handed another four hundred plunks, and the third performance came off.

This time the swell dame's understudy, a big black nig, took her part, and when he'd thumped the fishes on the nut and dumped the pan, he

## THE MAGIC LAKE

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gave the sultan a face, and said, "Phizt," and then hit the hole in the wall.

Well, the sultan said that show had any parlor magic he ever saw faded, and that he'd have to learn something more about those fishes. So, when he heard from the fisherman that they came from a lake about an hour's trolley ride in the hills, he called up the grand vizier and the chief rooky and the rest of the push and asked them whose ward the lake was in. They said he could search them; it was the first news of a lake they'd had; and he ordered them to saddle their nags and go along while he staked it out. With the fisherman for a pilot, they blew out to the duck-pond then, and when the gang saw it, they said it was a new one on them; they'd monkeyed around those hills a heap, but they'd never run up against that lake before.

The lake was a regular Christmas toy-shop for colored fish; and the sultan got a great thirst on to learn what sort of a Fourth of July game it was. So he turned the keys and the combination of the safe over to the grand vizier,

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gave him orders to keep the gang sober while he was gone, and headed into the country to get information. Wouldn't the funny little ways they had of going about things in those days, to hear Saryzade tell it, rasp you?

The first thing the sultan bumps up against was a black marble palace with steel weatherboarding. Well, the door was open, and he mosied in and wandered about awhile, looking for the man who run the joint. There doesn't seem to be anybody at home, and he's knocking around taking stock of the shop — it's furnished in hot stuff style: silk tapestries and gold and silver door-knobs and Brussels carpets and fountains flowing diamonds and pearls, and a birdery in the garden — when he hears somebody in another room say: "Oh, fortune, you're handing it to me too strong: for Heaven's sake let up, or do me for good."

Then he blows into the other room, and finds a young fellow there humped up on a throne. It was easy to see the boy on the throne was sicker than a cat.

He gives the sultan his nod back, but sticks

## THE MAGIC LAKE

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to his seat like a man with the gout. Then the sultan shoots a lot of questions at him about who owns the concern, what happened the toy-shop fish, and why he looked so down on his luck.

Well, the young fellow gives it to the sultan straight that he's made of marble from the waist down.

"Heavenly smoke!" says the sultan; "I've been given the marble heart a few myself, but this is the worst case of marble I ever bumped into."

After that the boy on the throne tells him how it all happened. Says he: "This is the Kingdom of the Black Isles, and my dad used to be king here. His name was Marmalade, and when he croaked I got his job, and married my cousin; and for five years she was my baby and I was hers; and then she soured on me. And one day it was tipped off to me straight by one of her dames, that she put drops in the nightcap that I took every night before hitting the bed, and then went out on a date while I slept.

"So that night I pitched the toddy out of

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the window, when she wasn't on, and trailed after her. Whenever she bumped into a gate, she said some magic words and it opened, and she met the guy that had cut in on me in the garden.

"I was pretty sore, and when they passed me on a promenade, I gives the mark a swipe in the neck with my skimiter that fixes him good and plenty. He'd have been a dead one in about three ticks, but Susie enchanted him, and he's been in a kind of dead-alive trance ever since.

"After that I blew back to bed, and next morning I found Susie holding down the other pillow. She never let on she thought it was I nicked her friend, but after while, she got out a lot of mourning-clothes, and said her father and her mother and her brother were all dead, and I let it go at that, to see what she'd do. Well, she had a big weeping fiesta for a year, and then I gave her permission to build a swell tomb for herself, and she built it and christened it the Palace of Weeps; and on the quiet she

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moved the skate in the trance into it from where she had him cached.

“She wasted a good deal of life with that guy after that, and tried all kinds of ways to bring him out of his trance, but it was no go. She was dead stuck on that fellow, and she weeps enough over him to float a war-ship. One day I looked in on her when she was off guard, and, say, the way she cooed over that plug made me weary.

“Well, I let that sort of thing go on for two or three years, and then one day I blew into Susie’s hypnotic sanitarium, and told her the circus would have to put up its shutters. I said the half-dead jay was nothing special as an ornament, and that I didn’t want him around any longer. Then I pulled out my skimiter to give him the coup, when I’ll be good and paralyzed if she didn’t hand me some sort of a high sign and change my first story into marble. I’ve been having a rank time of it since, you can gamble.

“After the dame fixed me that way, she freighted me over here, and changed the town



## HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS

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into that lake and the people into those fish — the white ones are Mussulmans, the red Persians, the blue Christians, and the yellow Jews. She made the place a howling desert, and you wouldn't recognize it; the way she acted was enough to turn a Jew yellow. Well, to get good and square, she blows in here every day and gives me a clubbing, and the rest of the time she spends with her hypnotized mash."

The marble king weeps a few when he gets through with his story, and then he and the sultan put up a job on Susie.

So, the next morning, the sultan goes to the Palace of Weeps early. He finds the place illuminated with fancy wax torches till you can't rest, and there are daisy smells in the air, and the skate in the trance has the best bunk on the ranch.

Well, the sultan doesn't do much to that mark. Oh, I guess not. He cuts him off behind the ears and drops him down a well; and then he crawls into the guy's bed and waits for Susie.

Susie the Sorceress shows up after awhile, and

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the first thing she does is to float in and give the king with the stone basement his clubbing; and, say, the way the marble boy howls makes the sultan drag the covers up around his ears. After that, Susie blows up to the sultan. She thinks he's her boy, and she fires a lot of sweet names at him, and asks him if he's never going to get well and speak to her again.

The sultan pretends to come to then, and he's mighty grouchy. He tells Susie he'd have been on his pins long before if she'd only quit beating the pie out of the marble boy and disenchanted him, and that he couldn't get any rest day or night on account of the boy's howls.

When Susie hears him pipe up, she nearly has a spasm, she's so pleased, and she skips right over and disenchant the marble boy and tells him to pull his freight. Then she chases herself back to the sultan, and he says he's some better, but that the fishes — the Jews and the rest of the push — in the lake put their heads out every night at midnight, and make a roar at the way they've been treated, and that if she wants him to come out of his trance all

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O. K., she'll have to fix everything like it used to was.

Well, Susie is tickled at the chance, and she slides down to the lake and sprinkles some water on it, and says "Hi presto change," or something like that, and the lake turns into a big town; and the sultan's people get a scare at finding themselves in the thick of it.

Then Susie wiggles back and tells the sultan what she did. That's what the sultan's been waiting for, and he hops off the dead guy's bed and hands her a soak across the corsets with his skimiter, and cuts her in twice; and after that, things are lovely all around.

The sultan adopted the King of the Sooty Islands, and made him heir to everything; and they loaded up a hundred camels with double eagles and hundred-dollar bills from the treasury of Marmalade the Second, and with the grand vizier and the rest of the gang screwed their nuts for home; and maybe the sultan wasn't handed a surprise when he found he was a year's journey from his town on account of the enchantment.

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But when he got back home he found everything running like clockwork, and he ordered up a present for everybody, and told the people the yarn about Susie and her mash and the marble king, and everybody was pleased.

Then, because the fisherman was the one who opened the game, the sultan made him rich, and the fisherman passed the fish business up for good. But he didn't lose anything by that, because it was a frost, anyway, with only four throws a day.

## SINBAD THE SAILOR

**S**INBAD the sailor was one of Saryzade's best. He had a few gay adventures? Well, I should think! He was up against about everything that came off the bat in his time.

One day a man named Hinbad, or Hinkybad, came along where old Sinbad lived. This was after Sinbad had his record, which was a beaut, you can gamble. Well, Hinkybad sat down in the shade by Sinbad's house to take a rest. He was a walking dray, if I get Saryzade right, a porter that lugs goods around, and he was sick of his job; pretty sick. In the street where old Sinbad lived, the sprinkling-cart used rosewater, and the place smelt pretty fine; and a big eat was on in Sinbad's palace, and a string band was making the place gay; and Hinkybad got a whiff of the roast, and the whole thing hit him hard. Old Sinbad was an aged

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old bird then, with a beard like a goat, and he didn't do anything but give his friends big eats and keep them tanked up while he shot those tales into them.

"Whose place is this?" Hinkybad said to one of old Sinbad's hired men, when the man came down the alley dressed up like a lord. And the hired man said:

"I thought you lived in this town. Didn't you ever hear of Sinbad the sailor? This is his shack, and I guess he's It, all right, all right. I guess he's seen the world. He's been there, all right, all right, and he's got more dough than the whole Vanderbilt push put together."

When Hinkybad heard that, he thought of the tough times he was against and the tapioca Sinbad had, and he got pretty sore; and he howled:

"What did this mug ever do to get all that dough, while I only get soup, soup, soup, all the time?"

When he made that spiel, old Sinbad piped him and dragged him inside, and gave him a

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seat at the dinner-table right next to him; and made him eat, and pitched wine into him, and told him about his life, and those star adventures of his.

Say, maybe that old sea-cow Sinbad wasn't a good old horse as well as a gay adventurer. He'd been out seven times in the wild and woolly world, and every time he told Hinkybad about one of these trips, he tipped him two hundred plunks — a hundred sequins — just to show him he was a good fellow, and told him to blow in next day on his way down-town and hear the next. Well, Hinkybad enjoyed himself, and made a good thing out of it, and I guess those tales were all right.

Sinbad's first time out wasn't much. When his governor blew over the river, he left Sinbad a lot of the needy, and Sinbad burned most of it up, playing the races and getting jags on and buying eats, like any other young fellow who gets going. But one day he bumped up against the Salvation Army and contracted a pious streak; and then he reformed and became a merchant, because his governor had been in that

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line. That opened the way for trouble, and he had lots of it.

He and some more fellows in the same biz fixed up a ship-full of goods, and started out for India down the Persian Gulf. They did a little trade along the way, and one day they spotted a two-for-a-nickel island. Saryzade said the island looked like a green meadow, but she kept it to herself how tall the grass was.

The captain threw the cowcatcher overboard and heaved to, and Sinbad and his friends, the dry-goods push, bobbed over to the island. Say, that outfit was pretty much to the bad; there wasn't a good eye in the bunch. Only a lot of lobsters would take a whale for an island. That island was nothing more than a whale having a snooze on the off shift.

When the gang boarded him they opened their baskets and got out their booze and their railroad sandwiches, and some fresh guy from Hoboken or some place started a fire on his back. Say, about that time that whale had a fit. He hadn't been to a fire since early days, and that bake-oven on his back excited him. When he waked up he



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gave a shake and the gang got the scare of their lives. The captain of the ship smoked the situation, and he yelled for them to hurry, but he didn't need to. They were hurrying. They were doing the slide for their boat like a pack of thieves, and some took a try at swimming they were so anxious to get away.

But Sinbad got a poor start. He just had time to hop up on his pins, with the basket in one hand and a flask in the other, when Jonah's old partner switched up his tail and pulled his freight for home and mother at the bottom of the sea, and when Sinbad hit the water, he dropped the flask and basket in the general bustle. He was down below some time, and when he came up he found himself in the wet with a few friends.

Well, a breeze blew up just then, and instead of hanging around, so the fellows in swimming could get on board, the captain "took advantage" of it to hoist his sails and screw his nut out of there. Wouldn't that make you cry? Talk about dumping a man when you get a



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show. I guess that captain threw the hooks into the gang in the water good and plenty.

All Sinbad had to do then was to swim out. That was easy. Some of the commercial fellows got to the ship by fancy swimming, and the rest drowned, but Sinbad froze on to a chunk of mahogany left over from the Hoboken man's fire and floated around with it for a couple of days and nights. That was the first time he was against it, but he had oceans of sand in his make-up, a hopeful nature, and the luck of a balloonist; and it was a cinch he'd come under the wire on time.

When he got through with that long float, he bumped into another island — the real thing this time; no gold bricks. The king of that country had a stock-farm on this island, and when the breeding season was over Sinbad blew up to town with the mark who managed it, and saw the king and told him what happened him; and the king said he was sorry, and gave him an order for everything he needed.

Sinbad bummed around the water-front then and travelled with the merchants who blew into

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town, so that he'd catch any news from Bagdad or his ship. He also ran considerably with some learned Indians, because he liked their chin, Saryzade says. They must have been good themselves. Besides that, he didn't forget to show up at the court right along and keep solid with the king, so his joblots would stand good for his board.

Well, one day in comes the ship with his goods, and he waltzes down to the wharf and claims them, but the captain gives him the haha, and wants to know who he buncoed last. That captain was a lulu. It wasn't enough to ditch him after he fell off the whale, but he has the face now to say he saw him die. Sinbad ought to have cut into him with a club; a few whacks at his nut would have made him a better man.

But Sinbad gets identified by the rest of the push, and then the captain pretends to know him, and says grace over his escape and says he's glad. Wouldn't that tire you?

Well, Sinbad made good for his board by giving the king a big present, and the king,

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to show he was all right himself, gave him a bigger one back. Then Sinbad made a deal with his dry-goods for aloes and camphire and cloves and goods in that line, and sailed back home in the same old ship. When he got back to a seaport town named Bussorah, he sold his goods at a hundred per cent. profit, and blew home to Bagdad with two hundred thousand plunks in the bank. Two hundred thousand plunks! Did you catch that? And after taking a whale for an island. I guess old Sinbad didn't have much luck.

## SINBAD'S SECOND ADVENTURE

**O**LD Sinbad jumped all the pleasures of a home for another shy at the outside in two or three moons, and that was his second inning with trouble. He floated out on the briny again with a lot more drums and a box-car of groceries, and went trading along some more islands.

One day he went ashore some place with some of the gang and took a snooze under a tree, and when he waked up, the ship had pulled its freight and left him by his lonesome. That was a tough place to get ditched in where he was, because nobody lived there, and there was nothing much to eat; and so he pounded himself on the nut and the chest-protector and felt mighty bad.

Then, after he chalked up another score against the merchant marine for throwing him down again, he skinned up a sapling and took

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a look at the country. Away off in the dim he caught a glimpse of something white, and he put on his specs and took another look; and then he got down and struck out to see what it was.

When he gets over to it he sees it's a big, white thing of some sort that's got the Chicago Auditorium and the Mormon Tabernacle faded for size; and it's round and smooth and hard like a China bowl, and when he walks around it it takes him five minutes to make the lap. There's nary a nick in it anywhere, nor a flight of steps, nor a sign-board; and no lace or trimmings or anything. Well, he's trying to get up a bet with himself what kind of a woozle woozle it is, when, biff! the sun gets eclipsed, and along comes a bird the size of two or three hills. That's right. Saryzade got that straight from Sinbad when he used to come sit on her back steps nights.

That bird was what those guys called a roc, and there were no flies on those rocs, neither. Well, Sinbad tumbles that the big white thing



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is the roc's egg, and that the old bird's come home to roost for the night.

So he sneaks in close to the lee side of the egglet, and when the old bird cuddles down over it, he says to himself, "Looks like it's up to me to play duck on the roc," and he hops on the roc's toe and straps himself fast; and he has a feather-bed all fine and lovely, and no price to pay.

In the morning when the roc stretches herself, old Sinbad says: "I guess we're going some place to-day."

And you may remark he did. The ride he got on that roc's toes beat the fast mail easy up. The roc went up in the blue till Sinbad's head ached, and then she dropped down so sudden he lost his breath. When she hit the turf, he concluded it was time to change cars, and he unbuckled his straps and took his grip and jumped off.

Nice place he'd bumped into then. Sort of a valley with straight sides, all rock, that nobody could climb, and he wasn't there five minutes till he began to see snakes the size of elephants.

## SINBAD'S SECOND ADVENTURE

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Oh, yes; that's correct. And he hadn't been drinking anything, either.

The roc grabbed one of the crawlers and started back for that humming-bird's egg of hers, and then Sinbad got a chance to look around. In two minutes he was willing to trade the place back for the place he'd jumped. But the last fast mail and express had just pulled out of the station, with a consignment of fresh snake billed through, and he couldn't get away; not that day.

The only good thing about that valley was diamonds. It was broken out with diamonds. And there were bushels of them that skinned the Kohinoor every which. If any member of the ancient family with the triple ball coat of arms had ever got a peep at that valley, he'd have fainted on the spot.

Sinbad walked on diamonds all day; and he had the shop to himself, because those elephantine anacondas didn't want to mix with the roc any more than they could help, and kept in their holes in the daytime. When night came, Sinbad got in a cave and rolled a boulder in

## HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS

the mouth of it to keep the snakes out. You can search me how he ever moved a stone big enough to stop one of those elephant snakes. Saryzade didn't explain. He may have had a derrick concealed about him, but the book doesn't say so.

Well, after he had dined on the sandwiches he had left over from the day before, and said his prayers, he turned in, and then those elephant snakes waddled up to the cave and hissed at him. They piped up strong, and never dropped a note or took a drink till daylight, and he never got any more sleep than a tree-toad. I've seen men who had the snakes, but that's a better one.

When the rising sun trooped up the eastern sky and the day broke, the snakes jarred off and pulled their freight to dodge the roc, and then Sinbad came out for some fresh air. He sat down on a pile of cheap diamonds to have breakfast, but he was so full of sleep he went off into a siesta with his fork in the air.

Just about that time of day a big chunk of meat hit the earth next to him and woke him

## SINBAD'S SECOND ADVENTURE

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up, and then it began to rain meat into the valley from the rocky mountains above. For a few ticks the air was crowded with meat — brains, briskets, and kidneys; porterhouse steaks, choice cuts, and fancy roasts.

Maybe old Sinbad doesn't smoke up when he catches on to that. He turns on some valuable information he has stored away in his nut, and it strikes him all of a heap that that's the celebrated diamond valley where the diamond dealers throw meat to the birds, and get diamonds in the draw. All around the rocks up above there were eagle roosteries; and the diamond merchants chucked meat into the valley and the diamonds stuck to the meat, and the eagles swooped down and snaked it up to their nests in the roosteries; and then the merchants waltzed up and shoed them away and pinched the diamonds. That was a great game; it had Kimberley roped to the mast.

Old Sinbad was always right in line when there was anything doing, and he gobbles his grub up fast; and then he gathers a sackful of the best diamonds, and ties some liver and

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a roast and two or three soup-bones to his back, and lies down to wait for business. It isn't long coming. In about a minute an eagle, that's a bird for working overtime and hogging everything in sight, flutters down and couples on to the roast and flies away with him.

"This is one on your eaglets," old Sinbad whispers to himself when that happens, but he makes no noise because he knows it's likely to be fatal if he's dropped.

When the eagle gets him up to its nest, the diamond dealers howl like a lot of demons on a toot and drive him away, and the joker who owns the nest blows up to pick the crop. Just then Sinbad gets up on his pins, and makes him a French bow. Say, you could have knocked that diamond man down with a feather. But instead of being a gentleman and springing a button to Sinbad's hairbreadth escape, as soon as he gets his wind back he begins to beef about Sinbad stealing his diamonds.

"That's the second roast I've had to-day," Sinbad says, slicing the meat off himself. Then he says to the diamond man, "Ring off, ring

## SINBAD'S SECOND ADVENTURE

off. I don't want the nest; I'm no bird;" and he opens his diamond sack, and tells him to help himself and not get nervous.

Well, the rest of the diamond push romped over to Sinbad's nest, and when they saw how he'd worked it to shake the diamond valley, they gave him a diploma for sand. But they didn't throw any bouquets at his scheme, because they thought they were pretty slick themselves.

The grouchy mug smiled once more pretty soon, and took one of the smallest diamonds in the bag. Sinbad told him to pitch in and take some more, but he said he didn't want to pay income tax on too much property. Those were good diamonds, weren't they?

After that, old Sinbad went home with the diamond fishers back to Bagdad, but he did some tie walking before he got there. He said he saw some funny things along the road. He gives it to Hinkybad cold, that on one island where he camped the rhinoceros goes against the elephant in a finish fight, and jabs his horn into the elephant's hay cupboard, and carries him off on his nut; and then the elephant's blood

## **HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS**

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and blubber drips into his eyes and he goes down blind, and about that time the roc-bird slops along and hoops them both off to feed the little rocs. Do you believe that, Charlie?

Sinbad bumps up against Balsora after awhile, and gets transportation to Bagdad. When he gets home he dumps a lot of dough on the poor, and settles down again, and after that he spends most of his time telling his friends all kinds of snake stories, and what a rocky time he had.

### SINBAD'S THIRD ADVENTURE

**O**LD Sinbad didn't have much more sense than a bug when it came to staying home with Mollie and the baby. He preferred going some place where there was excitement, and he had his mitt out for trouble again pretty soon, and got it. The ship he and the merchant push he went with this time chartered got mixed up in a Kansas cyclone, and was blown into another bunch of islands. Always a few islands wherever Sinbad went.

In one of these there was a regular Golden Gate harbor, but the captain didn't want to go there. He said not for his money, if he could help it. He said there was a lot of little red Injins there, and that he hadn't lost any of them. The Injins were hotter than pepper, and no good to monkey with. But the wind



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blew him in, and he had to hitch up to the pier.

He told the gang not to put up a scrap with the little Injins because there was only about seven million of them, and if anybody soaked one they'd do up the whole ship.

The little Injins spotted them quick, and came hustling down the pike in droves. They were all hammered-downs two feet high, and they had yards and yards of brick-dust whiskers all over them. There wasn't a pretty one in the bunch. They swarmed all over the *Sarah Jane* as if they owned it. Old Sinbad scoots up to the starboard bow and holds out his hand to the one with the longest whiskers, and says: "How d' do, Mr. Terra Cotta. Glad to see you." But his bricktoplets gives him the icy, and the play falls flat.

For a lot of beet-colored dwarfs they were a nervy outfit, and full of business. They shinned up the masts and pulled down the sails, and keelhailed the anchor and cut the hawser in two, and manned the windless and jigsawed her inshore, chattering all the time like a lot

### SINBAD'S THIRD ADVENTURE

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of magpies, till Sinbad's head ached; then they fired everybody out of the ship on to the island in a hurry, and wound up the garboard strake and oiled it, and pulled their freight for the island where they lived. Nobody lifted a paw to stop them, and they didn't let old Sinbad or any of the push even land a trunk. They had their gall with them.

When Sinbad found himself "Aground on the Rocks," minus everything but his clothes, he says to himself: "On the level, I ought to be driving cows. But if ever I catch up with any of that sawed-off push away from home, I'll beat them to death."

There was nothing else doing, so Sinbad and the push blew down the pike till they came to a tall palace with a two-leafed ebony gate, and they dropped into that and looked around. The first thing they piped was a court, with a croquet-ground full of human bones at one end and a tennis-court that swarmed with roasting spits at the other. The place looked dismal.

Sinbad said, "You can't get any beer here," and they started for the gate again, and then

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the palace door blew open, and a one-eyed nigger giant came out with a Fourth of July strut. He was a peacherino; you can bet all your aunt's money on that.

The invoice said he was two hundred feet high in his socks, had a horse's mouth, elephant's ears, railroad spikes for teeth, and finger-nails a foot long, and that his one lamp was red and was anchored right in the middle of his forehead, and blazed like a foundry furnace. And he was also a way long on upper lip. It hung clean down to his watch-pocket, and these pikers, who are always giving away a lot of theirs, ought to have had a chance to make a show down with him. His face was all the money. He had a Chinese josh lashed to the mast any time or place. Oh, he was a hot dog, all right.

"It's no good augur to meet an ogre at lunch-time," Sinbad said, and he turned the back of his hat to the front, and got up and walked around his chair.

A blind man could see it was time for the gang to chase themselves. But they were paralyzed, stuck fast, caught in a frog, rooted.

## SINBAD'S THIRD ADVENTURE

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Talk about being hypnotized. I guess that gang was hypnotized. The giant gave them a glare with his red lamp, and Sinbad saw it was coming to them in carriages.

Then the giant picked them up one by one and felt them all over to find a fat one. Sinbad was too skinny for anything but soup, and the captain got the Jonah ticket. The giant built a fire among the bone-piles at the left of the piazza, and roasted his sea-dogs on a spit, and eat him for supper; and then sat down and crossed his legs and lit his pipe, while — the — gang — looked — on.

Oh, my; oh, my; that push was too the sad-dings. As fighting men, a band of sheep had them skinned to death. There's wasn't a scrapper in the bunch. First a lot of little two-foot two-fors with red lilacs pinch their ship under their noses, and they don't even say, "Now, stop," and then a one-eyed nigger giant with a side-show head-piece starts a hash-foundry with them. That outfit must have escaped from the Old Women's Home.

Next thing the black baby with the red lamp

## HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS

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did was to roll over on his back and go to sleep, and he snored louder than thunder, according to Saryzade. I've bumped into some good snorers in my time, but I don't remember anything up to that. Did those chumps throw the hooks into him or make a sneak when he went off guard? Nit. There wasn't that much enterprise in the collection. They amused themselves all night weeping over their hard luck. Wouldn't that scald you?

In the morning the giant went out fishing or something, and the gang spent the day knocking about the island eating apples. In the evening they floated back to the castle because they couldn't find any accommodations any place else. That was a good reason. The nigger giant was playing solitaire. He couldn't make it come out, and he gave it up after awhile and eat another one of the push for supper and went to bed.

It would make a glass-eyed man weep the way that star aggregation of flubdubs did. For about four days they fooled around that island every day and mosied back to the nigger giant's

## SINBAD'S THIRD ADVENTURE

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castle every night; and the nigger giant went fishing or played solitaire and got fat eating them. He never had anything but roasts; fries and fricassees and stews were too much work.

Sinbad finally came out of his trance, and then he got an idea. I don't know where he got it, but he put the gang on to a scheme, and they built a lot of rafts on the beach; and one night, when the nigger giant had eaten another man and gone to sleep and begun to snore louder than thunder, they heated a lot of roasting spits red-hot, and ten of the huskiest of them, with Sinbad up front, sicked themselves on him and poked the spits in his eye. Say, girls, that was a brave deed.

Maybe they didn't get a rise out of that one-eyed nigger giant when they did that. He got up and howled, and reached around for them, and tried to make a rough house. If he'd got them in his fins he'd have done things to them. But they were too good on the sprint. They skated under the piazza and gave him the pantomime laugh, and he played blind man's bluff with himself among those bone-piles.

## HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS

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After awhile he went out of the two-leafed gate howling for further orders, and then they rolled their hoops out of his cook-shop, and chased themselves down to the beach and got ready to jump the rafts. They hoped he'd die, and if he did, they intended to grab his castle and set themselves up in business and grow spike teeth and eat everybody that came that way.

But he howled all night and kept the birds awake; they could hear him roaring all over the island; and in the morning he came down the line with enough other nigger frights to stock every freak show in the country.

"Looks like a busy day," Sinbad said, when he saw them coming, and then the push got the biggest kind of a move on to get away.

But the band of freaks waded into the water and shied bricks at them, and they knocked the pie out of every raft but the one Sinbad was on. Sinbad always had good luck. He was captain of his raft, and he had two skates for a crew, and they got away and navigated up and down for two days, and then bumped into another island.

### SINBAD'S THIRD ADVENTURE

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That island was a fat place for fruit-farms, and Sinbad and the crew stuffed themselves with peaches and stewed prunes and stuff, and had a good time the first day. But there was a snake there, and he spotted them, and showed up that night and swallowed one of the skates; and that made Sinbad and the other skate nervous.

They smoked the snake sizing them from a cool place in the shade the next day, and they looked up a tall tree; and that night they roosted in the top branches. But the snake blew up again in the evening, as soon as the doors were open, and got the other skate; just because he was perched on a lower branch than Sinbad. It was a cinch Sinbad would get the highest branch in the draw: he never lost the toss for position in his life.

When his snakelets gets skate number two, Sinbad drops that he's got to put up something better than the tree-branch dodge if he wants to gallop in on the home-stretch. So he builds a Robinson Crusoe stockade around the tree, and when the snake waltzes up for another free lunch the next night, he bumps into the barbed



## HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS

wire and gets thrown down; and Sinbad gives him the rah rah through the slats, and tells him not to get so gay with himself.

Well, his snakelets finds a shady place, and he squats on the end of his backbone and leans back against a tree and crosses his legs, and says to Sinbad:

“Well, I guess I can wait for you.”

“Wait and be hanged,” Sinbad said.

“There’s no strings on you.”

Then his snakelets slides up to the slats, and blows his breath in Sinbad’s face, and his breath is worse than a tannery, and it nearly kills Sinbad; and Sinbad says to himself, “Suffering pythons! I can’t stand that breath. I’ll have to go and drown myself.”

And in the morning, when the snake wiggles back to Snakeville, Sinbad canters down to the sea to pitch himself in. But he sees a ship down there, and he gives a college yell, and flies his turban on a stick; and they take him on board, and everything is lovely for him again.

That ship’s the one that loses him on the last voyage, and his smoked hams and beans

### **SINBAD'S THIRD ADVENTURE**

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and everything are still on board, and the captain turns them over to him. Well, he sells his stuff at top figures in a bull market at an island named Salabat or Swaticat or something, and sails for home, and one foggy Wednesday morning he makes another grand-stand finish at Bagdad with his pockets full of dough.

## SINBAD'S FOURTH ADVENTURE

**T**HE next time Sinbad went out, he skated down through Persia to a seaport, and bought a lot of furnishing goods, and loaded them on a ship with some more mugs in the same biz, and went trading some more where he couldn't miss bumping into a few islands. A storm hopped up, and gave the ship a few slams, and all there was left was a lot of fire-wood. The whole push was in the water and the cargo was lost, and all Sinbad won out of the ruin was a plank. He nabbed the plank, and commenced swimming with one hand. Some other flubdubs drew planks, too, and they joined the swimming contest, and after awhile the current pitched them against — an island, of course. You thought they bumped into a barber-shop, didn't you, Charlie?

## SINBAD'S FOURTH ADVENTURE

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Fruit and spring-water was all they could dig up on the island, and they flipped a nickel to see who picked the oranges and worked the pump, and then they had strawberries and strawberryade and went to bed.

The next morning they spotted some shacks, and they cut across lots to see who lived there; and a band of niggers came out and grabbed them. The niggers sorted them over, and Sinbad and five other Tommies were knocked down to a big moke. The big moke herds them home with him, and gives them seats on the front porch, and passes around a lot of herbs and stuff to eat.

But Sinbad has his weather eye open for something in the bunco line, and when the waiter gets around to him, and says, "Have some?" he says, "Not on your life."

And there's where he's a wise boy. Because, when the balance of the push get filled up on the herbs, they go dippy, and the niggers feed them on rice and cocoanut-oil, and fatten them up for a big eat; and when Saint Jojo's Day comes,

## HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS

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they all go to the kettle, and the nigs have a nice spread.

Sinbad keeps his nut clear because he shies at the herbs, and he passes up most of the rice patties and cocoanut drip, and eats just enough to keep his slats from sticking to his backbone.

Well, he gets sick, and falls away till he looks like a fright, and the niggers look him over and punch his ribs, and say:

"You couldn't get a square for a cat out of him;" and after that they don't worry to watch him much. Then, one day the whole nigger outfit goes away to a caucus or something, and Sinbad lays himself out to make a sneak. One old moke who's hanging around with the rheumatism spots him getting away, and hollers, "Here! Here! Come back!"

And Sinbad said, "Go chase yourself. I've got business down the line," and pulls his freight.

He travelled a week, and then he fell on to a pepper-ranch at the height of the harvest, and got a job pulling peppers; and when the

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crop was raked and stacked and shipped over the short line to Chicago or wherever it went, he pulled out for town with the pepper pullers, and told the king his tale of woe; and the king ordered the leading tailor to make him a lot of clothes in the latest, and gave the G. V. orders to treat him handsome. That king was all-wool and a yard wide, with gold mountings, and Sinbad froze to him like two cakes of ice; but he got back at Sinbad plenty before the string was played out.

Sinbad spotted an opening for business right away in that man's town. There weren't any saddles or bridles used in that country; nobody knew anything about them; and he hired some men and opened a saddle and bridle manufactory; and his saddles and bridles made a big hit with the king and all the swells, and made him rich.

Well, he was just hooping along in the harness business, when, one day, the king says to him:

"Skinbad, I'm stuck on you, and I'm going to ask you for a favor, and you mustn't say

## HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS

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nit. See? I want you to get married and take out naturalization papers and settle down here."

"All right, old man. Just as you say," Sinbad says. "I've skated around a good deal, and I'm no prize beauty, but if you can find the dame, I'll sit into the game with her; and I'll fix up the rest of the business when you get ready."

Sinbad tried to look as if he liked the layout, because it wouldn't do to buck the king; and the king trotted out a lady and put his programme through. The dame was a good-looker, and belonged to the four, and had lots of dough, and there'd never been any talk about her; and she and Sinbad pulled together first-class; but Sinbad was kind of restless and anxious to get back to Bagdad. While he was stewing over that, the frou of the man next door croaked, and he went over to the man's place to show his sympathy.

"Sorry, Smith, old man, your wife's dead," he said. "Hope you'll keep well, and live a long time yourself."

"Kind of you, Skinbad, sure; and I appre-

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ciate it," said Smith. "But I don't see how I can win first money there. I've got just one more hour to monkey on the earth."

"How's that?" Sinbad asked. "Don't you feel well?"

"Feel well! I never felt fitter in my life," said Smith. "But that cuts nit. I've got to be buried with my wife; that's the law in this island. When your wife croaks they bury you with her, and when you croak she gets the same dose. You can gamble you don't get any chance here for the second and the third and the fourth. Not on your tintype. When your wife goes under the daisies it's all off to Grand Rapids with you."

"Is that straight? Well, that's a new one on me," said Sinbad, and while he and Smith were talking it over, Smith's relatives and friends blew in to help along with the funeral.

They laid the corpse out in her best, and put all her jewelry on her, and when they drove to the cemetery, Smith was perched up on the hearse alongside the driver. He had no chance to be late. Nit.



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They put his wife down a hole in the side of a mountain where they had their cemetery, and they put him in a coffin and gave him seven loaves of baker's bread and a bucket of mineral water, and dropped him down after her.

"So long, Smith. Take care of yourself," Sinbad said to Smith, when they got him down the hole, and they rolled a big rock over the place, and blew home to dinner.

"Wasn't that a nice funeral?" Sinbad's wife said, when they got home.

"First-class," Sinbad said. "But I was sorry to see Smith buried. He was one of the boys, and he was a crackerjack at poker. I don't believe he'll last long on that lunch they gave him."

Sinbad was worried over the way they did for Smith, and he trotted up to the palace one morning when business was slack, and said to the king: "Say, Billy, how about those burial laws? I've been pretty near everywhere from 'Frisco to New York, and I never tripped over anything like that before; I think the legislature that passed that statute must have been full

## SINBAD'S FOURTH ADVENTURE

of booze. But what I want to know is where I'm at in this deal. Do I have to stand for that, or do I class as an honorary member?"

"Nit," said the king, "you class with the gang. You're It, just like the rest of us," and he sprung a smile at Sinbad's expense.

Then Sinbad said: "How about that thirty days' notice I didn't get before I went against that marriage bureau? Looks as if I got the double cross, eh?"

"Oh, no. We put you in right," the king chirruped. "No favorites played. If the queen hits the trail first, I get buried with her. You were supposed to be wise on that. If you slipped a cog, that's your funeral. See?"

"Yep; I see. Looks like my funeral," Sinbad said. But he tumbled that the king wouldn't change the rules, and he went home.

Then he gets scary as a cat about his wife's health. He orders her to keep her feet dry, and takes a peep at her tongue every morning, and whenever she gets a headache he has seven kinds of fits, and sends up three doctors and a trained nurse. But the whole thing was lost

## HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS

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time; he might as well have put up his hands at the start-off. In about a week she gets sick and turns up her toes, and nothing could stop her.

"Talk about dead hard luck," said Sinbad. "This wins the Suburban. I had to marry to keep in with the king, and now my wife's gone over the river, and they'll bury me. Maudy was a nice, loving girl, and she made our home cosy and pleasant, but she got me into it good and plenty when she died. These guys seem to think that law's just right, but I'm not for it, and I've got a minority report to turn in right here."

So he hit the king hard to let him out of the burial contract. But the king said he and everybody who was anybody would take in the funeral, but that that was the best they could do for him; and they laid his wife out in the same elegant style as Smith's, and boosted him up on the hearse the day they buried him, so he could look at the scenery on the way to the cemetery.

He made a last grand-stand spiel at the edge of the hole in the cemetery, but the old ladies

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shook their heads, and the Mollie boys said it was bad form; and they dropped his wife into the hole, and gave him his pail of Apollinaris and his seven loaves from the bakery, and shook hands with him, and told him to be good; and pushed him in after her, and put the cover on the cistern and went away.

When he gets down into the pit he finds it a big cave overstocked with corpses. It's a nice place, full of fresh air, and he likes it. Nit.

"On the dead," he says, sitting down on some guy's coffin, "I'd rather be eaten by a nigger than get this assignment. When I used to live at Farawayville I thought I was buried alive, but this is the real thing. What an A1 chance for business for some real live, hot devil."

His Apollinaris and hard-tack lasted about three days. Then he missed some meals, and got hungry enough to eat his coffin; and he says to himself:

"I'm good and sick of this thing. These widowers and people who fall in here come here to croak, and there's no use in their hanging around here for a week living on bread and

## HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS

water like a lot of dyspeptics. I never got a show to vote on that bury-pa-because-ma's-dead law, anyway, and I won't stand for it. Not by a two-thirds majority. The first bereft party that comes this way with a corpse is going to get it and get it good. My hand is against every man now. So watch me."

Then he goes into the wholesale sandbagging and hold-up business; and when they drop a widow down with her much beloved and lately deceased, he had a grand opening day, and bumps her on the Psyche knot with the thigh bone of some ass who was in the legislature when they passed that fool mortuary statute, and does for her and nails her sanitary lunch. He goes right along with the killing for two or three weeks, and lays out quite a considerable few people for their lemonade and crackers.

One day, when he'd just done a fat woman, he hears something walking in the cave in the dark, and he says, "I choose that," and starts after it. There wasn't anything much old Sinbad wouldn't go after when he was in form.

It was too dark in the cave to see anything,

## SINBAD'S FOURTH ADVENTURE

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and he didn't know but what he'd bump right into the hooks of a spook, but that cut no ice with him.

The thing runs and pants and pants and runs like a runaway clothing-store, and he hikes after it; and he shuts his dukes and swells out his chest, and says, "This is just where I live. I used to do a hundred in eleven. I guess I'll get you, all right."

Well, the thing runs a long ways, and Sinbad settles down to the steady pace that won him the long distance at Harvard in 220 B. C.; and after awhile he sees the light coming in through a hole ahead in the mountain; and the thing hops out of that, and he shoots after it, and just misses getting its tail as it ducks into the sea.

When he gets his wind back, he says: "Well, I got show, anyway, even if I have been off my feed for two or three weeks."

The thing Sinbad chased was some kind of a sea-beast that blew into that underground morgue to forage on the dead ones; so Saryzade says.

Sinbad patted himself on the back over win-

## **HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS**

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ning out of that hole, and then he shuffled back into it again and rolled up several bales of diamonds and jewelry those people there had no use for, and went out and waited for a ship to come by. He caught the last boat for Bagdad, and in a few days he rolled in there again with fortune number four.

## SINBAD'S FIFTH ADVENTURE

**O**LD Sinbad went on voyage number five in three or four moons, and he took along the same old merchant push and a boatload of goods as usual. The gang got off on a desert island to have a quiet little time, according to their custom, and they found a roc's egg with a young roc in it. The roclet was getting ready to make his *début*, and about a foot of his beak stuck out of one end of the egg, and a bunch of his tail-feathers out of the other.

When the push spots him, some fresh mark gallops up, and says, "Ah, there, birdie," and grabs a feather from his tail and sticks it in his hat.

Then Sinbad, who's met with a roc or two in his time, and isn't much for mixing with them, says as solemnly as he can, "Say, fellows, don't



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monkey with that pullet, unless you want trouble. It's a no good play."

But another guy chirps: "Whose chickery is this? I don't see any 'Keep off the rocs' sign around here."

"He's mine. I saw him first," a third mug chips in.

And then the gang makes a break for the egg; and they jump up on the roclet's back and play horse with him, and pull all his tail-feathers out and jam his hat down over his eyes and have a good time; and when they're through with their comic opera, they smash in the sides of the egg and pull him out by the scruff of the neck, and hit him with an axe, and pluck him and bake him up clam-fashion for dinner.

When the play starts, Sinbad says, "Count me out of that. You fellows'll be sorry. I know when to steer clear, and I got a hunch this time. You fellows'll find yourselves in it, if I don't miss my guess." Then he lies down and puts his hat over his eyes.

Well, the gang was trying to get Sinbad to try some of the roclet's liver, when two old

## SINBAD'S FIFTH ADVENTURE

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rocs arrived on the down train and got off at the station. They were Colonel Roc and his wife, the young roc's ma and pa. You ought to have seen that gang skip when they saw them coming; and the rocs let out some squawks that lifted Sinbad's hair and helped him run when they tumbled what had happened little Willie Roc.

But the rocs didn't dally round any. They deferred their mourning till some other occasion, and turned right around in their tracks and flew back the way they had come as fast as they could travel. The ship got away from the vicinity as quick as it could, too, because it was easy to see the rocs had business on their minds, even if the cook hadn't dreamed he was a jellyfish with green wings. But the rocs showed up in the blue, and caught up to the ship again about eleven o'clock, and they had a boulder apiece in their claws as big as a house.

When Sinbad spotted them and the Christmas gifts they carried, he said: "I've a notion to hand you skates one. I talked to you with tears in my eyes about that roc's egg. But

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you were all too gay to listen. You were too knowing. See where we are now? You've made monkeys of *this* little band of pilgrims."

The rocs heaved to directly over the ship, and old man Roc said to Mrs. Roc, "Bet you a dog I get them the first pop;" and then he sighted with one eye, and dropped his bundle of granite.

The man at the wheel had a good nerve, and he twisted the ship into the wind's eye, and the shot missed. So Lady Angelina Roc gave the colonel the haha, drew a bead and let go of her pebble. That time the pitching was too swift for the steer oar, and the quartz ledge hit the ship in the middle and broke it up a little; and everybody was mashed or drowned — except Sinbad.

There was never a roc-bird of any kind born — red, blue, heliotrope, striped, or pinto — that could pitch old Sinbad out in that style. He had his usual lucky number, and one plank went with it; and he tucked the plank under his arm and treaded water for a little bit, and then tripped over another island.

## SINBAD'S FIFTH ADVENTURE

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That was another fruit country, and so Sinbad bagged a lot of watermelons and cucumbers, and had lunch. The only thing in the way of scenery was an old duffer squatted on the bank of a brook. His old joblots looked sick and played out, and Sinbad thought he must be some other navvy like himself washed up by the tide. So he waltzes over to him, and said: "How d' do? Nice weather we're having."

The old man says nit, but he gives Sinbad some sort of a sign to carry him across the brook; and Sinbad makes a back and freights him over on his shoulders. And there's where Sinbad stumbles into the panel game with all four feet. That little, old, dried-up younger brother of old Father Time, with the puffs under his eyes, was The Old Man of the Sea, and the O M O T S was a dead hard game.

When Sinbad got on the other side of the wash, he stooped to let his sea-whiskers off. But the old mark didn't budge.

"Climb down," said Sinbad.

"Nit," said his sea-whiskers. "This isn't

## HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS

my corner. I live between 76th and Washington. Go on."

And he gave Sinbad a kick in the ribs with one foot.

Sinbad was flustered a bit at first, and then he cut in to make trouble; but the O M O T S wrapped his long, skinny leglets around his neck and gripped his throat with both paws and shut his wind off; and when he came to, his sea-whiskers said, "Now behave;" and Sinbad went out of business right there. He packed that old skate around all day, and when he woke up the next morning he found him still hanging to his neck.

"Are you here yet?" Sinbad said.

"You can't lose me, Charlie," said his sea-whiskers, and Sinbad got up and took him out riding again.

Well, Sinbad hauled that lovely old bag of bones all over that island for about two weeks. Sinbad was a regular human trolley-car. His old sea-whiskers was nobby and boss, and he spurred Sinbad in the ribs with his heels and



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## SINBAD'S FIFTH ADVENTURE

pulled his ears and poked him in the back of the neck, whenever he felt that way.

He steered Sinbad up to all the best fruit-trees in the place, and made him stand under the branches and keep the flies off while he sat on his neck and filled himself with nectarines and bananas. Oh, Sinbad had a government position all right.

"This is a poor one," he said to himself. "I guess the next time I meet some old mark washing his feet in a slough I'll give him the glad hand. Oh, yes. Sure. I don't think. Wouldn't my friends say I was a handsome gazabe if they could see me now?"

But one day Sinbad found some gourd-shells, and he washed them out and filled them full of grape-juice and set them out in the sun. In a week the juice was turned to wine, and he sailed in to have a time. He licked up a gourdful of the wine, and it hit the right spot, and he commenced to feel good and forget about his sea-whiskers. He sent another gourdful after the first, and the wrinkles all went out of his back, and he began to prance. He shuffled a



## HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS

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step or two, and then he downed another quart of the grape; and that rounded out his jag.

He got good and gay then, and he sang "Jerry, Go Ile the Car," and "Little Two Shoes," and "We'll All Be Wid You When You Tackle Paddy Flynn," and a lot more songs; and he danced the Highland fling and the two-step and did the hootchee kootchee, and spread himself in a buck and wing with extras tacked on. He danced all over the house, and his singing called the parrots up.

All this time the old skate who owned the sea was looking on and trying to keep his seat. When Sinbad calmed down for a minute, he cut in with a few remarks:

"What's the trouble?" said he.

"Trouble? My aunt. Who shays zere any trouble?" said Sinbad.

"Well, what's the circus and concert for?"

"I'm havin' ni'sh time," said Sinbad. "Get down a minute; want to tell you somethin'. Whishper it in your ear."

"Nit," said his sea-whiskers. "What's that stuff you've been gulping?"

## SINBAD'S FIFTH ADVENTURE

"Boozh," said Sinbad.

"Booze? Booze? Nit ferstay; that's a new one. Seems to heat you considerably. Pass the growler; I'll take a pull at it myself," the old skate said.

"Or right. Her'zh how," said Sinbad, and he passed up a couple of gourds to his sea-whiskers, and they drank together.

The O M O T S liked the grape, and he proceeded to get a load on as fast as he could. He sapped up the booze like a basket of sponges, and Sinbad worked off part of his jag handing him gourds. It didn't take the old mark long to drop his banner of gold and tumble off the water-wagon. He got so boozy he wanted to do Sinbad's songs all over again, and he un-braided his legs and hopped up and down and wriggled around and tried to dance on Sinbad's shoulders. He'd have made a warm sport if he'd got started earlier.

Well, Sinbad was good and sore on account of his sea-whiskers making a horse of him, and when his sealets got wobbly he cut in at a good opening and bucked him off into the road;

## **HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS**

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and then he bumped him on the head with a big rock, and fixed him for keeps.

“ You won’t ride any more people around this place, I guess,” Sinbad said, and he blew down to the beach and got on board a ship that had just tied up to the hitching-rack.

The sailors told him he was the first mug that ever got away from The Old Man of the Sea, and that the O M O T S had ridden more marks to death than some people have killed flies; and then Sinbad went and collected the “ Dead or Alive ” reward that was out for his whiskers, and sailed over to another island and went into the cocoanut business.

He dug cocoanuts for awhile, and traded them for aloes and peppers, and then changed off to pearl fishing; and finally went home to Bagdad with a shipful of aloes and woods and pearls and stuff, and made big thing out of it.

## SINBAD'S SIXTH ADVENTURE

**T**HE sixth time Sinbad went on a voyage, he cut across Persia and India again and got passage on a ship at an East Indian seaport. When he got out a long ways on the ocean, the captain of the *Mary Ann* lost his course. Well, he couldn't advertise, so he poked around with a stick for it, and after awhile he hooked it up again. But when he got it he jumped off his high seat and threw up his hands and snaked his turban off and pulled his whiskers out and knocked himself on the nut, as if he had rats in his garret.

Sinbad said to him: "What's eating you? Did you forget to tell your wife to put the cat out, or what?"

"We're done," the captain said. "It's all off. We're done."

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"Rare, medium, or well done?" Sinbad asked him.

Then the captain told him and the rest of the push that the ship was in the most dangerous place in the whole sea.

"And where were you when we were getting here, Mr. Captain Kidd?" Sinbad said to him.

"And what are we up against?"

"We're in a current," the captain said.

"We are? What of it? I've been in the swim before," Sinbad said.

The captain lets it out then that they're in a current that'll bump them on the rocks in about fifteen minutes, and advises them to pray, and goes on thumping his head and dragging his whiskers out. Some guy sets the sail the other way round then, but the ropes all break; and then the current shoots the ship straight at a mountain that sticks out of the sea, and bangs it on the rocks there and smashes it.

But nobody gets killed, and the gang fish a lot of provisions and some of their goods out of the water, and crawl up on the beach.

But when they get through with this work, the

## SINBAD'S SIXTH ADVENTURE

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captain says: "They've taken a big fall out of us this time, all right, all right. You fellows can all dig your graves now, and say 'Ta ta' to this world. Nobody who gets shipwrecked here ever gets away. Because this is the jumping-off spot, and we've done the jump."

That *was* a love of a place. There were about a million wrecks along the foot of that mountain, and the biggest gilt-edged collection of human skeletons ever gathered under one tent, or words to that effect. There was no way to get over the mountain or around it, if I get Saryzade right, and there was nothing to eat on that beautiful shore, barring the bones. Sinbad said it was his opinion that plenty of people had died there.

All over the beach wherever you looked there were goods of all kinds, and lots of them were valuable stuff. There were rubies and emeralds and diamonds and tiger's-eyes and all sorts of precious stones, and aloes-trees and chunks of ambergris and a lot more things that were selling for big prices at Bagdad. It was enough

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to make your eyes water, the good things that were going to waste on that beach.

Another thing there was a fountain of pitch, spouting into the sea. Sinbad said that the whales swallowed the pitch, and coughed it up again in the form of ambergris. Say, Charlie, what a world-beating ambergris factory a man could have started there with a band of healthy whales. Every time I hear a whale cough now I look around for a bundle of that stuff.

But the greatest scenic effect nailed up on the wall in that ward was a fresh-water river that came out of the sea and went into the mountain. Oh, yes; that's no dream. That's what that river did. It flowed out of the sea and into the mountain, and Sinbad sat on the bank and watched the chips go by.

And the water was fresh, all right. Sinbad had it assayed, and the samples gave three per cent. mud, seven and a half per cent. bugs, salt nit, and the rest just water. It was the first river of that kind Sinbad had got next to, and he lay down on his stomach and took a long look at it.

## SINBAD'S SIXTH ADVENTURE

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Well, when the gang got the situation sized, they divided up the feed-fare and gave every guy what was coming to him, and then they entered a scientific competitive contest to see who could live the longest on the grub given him. I put my dough on Sinbad, of course. I knew he was a cherry ripe, and would gallop in, whatever happened. His staying qualities were his main hold.

Maybe old Sinbad didn't learn to dig graves at that place. Well, I guess. The guys with him eat up what they had, and croaked one by one as the roses fall. It was a cold day when there wasn't somebody to bury for about two weeks. Sinbad helped stow them all, and the last two or three he had to bury all by himself. He got to be a first-class, popular gravedigger, neat, handy, and reliable. He could give satisfaction to all, and he held the belt for quick work. He could dig the grave, plant his man, and round off the mound in nineteen minutes, and that was the record in those parts.

Well, when he'd got the last man buried, his own grub was pretty near gone. He was living



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on two spoonfuls of beef tea and one gingersnap a day then, and his legs were beginning to wobble. So he dug his own grave and got into it, in order to be there when he went out. When he was digging his grave he felt tough and he was sore at himself, and he said:

"Well, this is the wildest play I've made yet. I seem to have a passion for suicide, and I get the wrong ticket every time the wheel turns. It's a wonder I couldn't get on to myself, and stay at home and be a farmer or something. But I guess this is the last flop out of the box. I'm done up sure this time, starched, blued, and ironed."

But while he was wiggling round in his grave, damning the pebbles and trying to find a soft spot, he gets it into his nut to go and take a last long look at that fresh-water river that runs into the mountain, and while he's rubbering at that, his ideas begin to smoke up, and he says to himself, "Maybe this river that goes in here comes out some place else."

Oh, my; oh, my; it's a wonder he or some of those flubdubs he buried didn't think of that

## SINBAD'S SIXTH ADVENTURE

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before. When that eighteen-carat notion bounces down on him he grabs his head and holds it tight so it won't explode. Old Sinbad was clever and game and a good fellow, but he was a shade slow to catch on sometimes. You had to fall a house on him or something to wake him up.

Well, he built a raft and loaded it with diamonds and rubies and cat's-eyes, and ambergris and aloes-wood and rich goods, and cut loose on that river that was flowing backward, and floated into the mountain. He ought to have tied one of those coughing whales to his hind axe, too. If he'd ever got it home where he could feed it on pitch, he'd have made a heap of money out of it.

The river ran into a dark cave, and Sinbad scooted along for several days inside the mountain. He finished his last can of tea and his last snap, and then he lay down on the barge and went to sleep. When he woke up, he found himself in the open country on the other side of the mountain; and the raft was tied to the shore, and a lot of colored people were rubbering around it. They told him they had spotted his

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raft bobbing down the Wabash, and had hauled it inshore. They were irrigating a bunch of corn-fields and watermelon patches, and they wanted to know how he came to be picnicking on the wet. When they heard his little tale, they held up their hands and said his experience was a Johnny Corker, and that he'd have to go and spring it on their king. So they packed him on a horse, and took his goods and waltzed him up to the king's place.

Well, the king was so struck with Sinbad's adventures that he had the yarn written in gold letters and filed in the county recorder's office. Sinbad unrolled his parcels and showed the king what a lot of fine cat's-eyes and diamonds and stuff he had picked up on the seacoast, and offered to give him the whole thing. But the king said that wasn't his style. He not only wouldn't take anything, but he said he'd do something for Sinbad himself before he left there. Then he turned Sinbad over to a main guy, and told him to give him a good time.

That was on the island of Sarahdub or something like that, and Sinbad stayed there for a

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month looking around. He went to see a place on the island where they had Adam in jail after he was fired from the Garden of Eden. I didn't know Adam had ever been in jail, but it's there in the book.

The cop at the jail told him Adam had been dead some time, and that most of the family had moved away from there. He said Adam was a warm number when he was alive — a dead game sport. He was willing to take a chance at anything, and he win out pretty near every time, except once when he took a flyer in apples on a tip from his wife, and got dumped hard.

By and by Sinbad hit the king for a passport so he could go back to Bagdad, and the king was such a real gentleman he offered him two, and gave him a fine present of something. Besides that, he gave him a letter and a present for O'Herrin Alraschid. O'Herrin was the Caliph of Bagdad. The letter was written on the skin of a yellow goat, or some beast that was worth money, and the ink used was blue. The letter went something like this:

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“ From the King of the Indians, whose parade starts off with a hundred elephants, and who lives in a big palace frescoed over with a hundred thousand rubies, and who has twenty thousand diamond-covered crowns in the safe deposit vaults, to Caliph O'Herrin Alraschid. Dear O'Herrin: — Though the little gift I send you isn't much, please accept it for friendship's sake. I'm a friend of yours, old man, and you can bet your eye on that. I'll prove it any time you want me to. I hope you're a friend of mine, because I believe I'm in your class, and a man you'll find it a good thing to tie to. Good-by.”

The present was a flowery offering, Charlie. There was a cup made out of a single ruby, and it was six inches high and an inch thick and full of pearls. There was a wagon-load of aloes-wood and camphire, and a snake-skin with scales as big as twenty-dollar pieces; and you couldn't get sick if you lay on that skin. But the article in the invoice that faded everything else was a slave-girl. She was a prize beauty — a beaut from Beautville. It would make you light in

## SINBAD'S SIXTH ADVENTURE

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the garret to look at her, and her pinafore was hung with diamonds. I guess she was perfectly miserable, from what Sinbad said.

Sinbad took these things and his ambergris and stuff and blew home to Bagdad, and he delivered the prize beauty and the letter and the ruby tumbler and the snake-skin to O'Herrin Alraschid.

When O'Herrin read the letter, he said: "Is this on the level? Is this Tommy as big a duck as he says he is?"

And old Sinbad said: "Cross my heart he is. He isn't swelling it a bit. That palace of his would make you blink. When his nibs goes out for a ride, he sits on a throne on an elephant's back, and the government officials and all the court hands line up in double ranks on both sides; and a guy rides in front of him on the elephant, with a gold lance, and another mark rides behind him on the elephant, and holds up a gold rod with an emerald six inches long and an inch thick on top of it; and he has a thousand soldiers mounted on elephants riding ahead of him to keep the street open, and the

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swatties and the elephants are dressed up in silk and gold cloth in high-toned style. While the procession is blowing along, the monkey with the lance keeps hollering: 'Behold the big, high muck-a-muck, the high-tempered, hard-hitting, dead-game Sultan of the Indians, whose brown-stone front sheds rubies the year round, and who has two million diamond crowns on the bank's books! Behold his crowned jags! He is a hotter dog than old Solomon, and a higher stepper, and the bell-wether king of any time or place. Take a look at him and die!' And the bloke with the emerald, on the back steps of the throne, keeps answering, 'But this great, all-wool, three-ply king must croak, must croak, must croak.' And the people all yell together, 'And — *that's* — no — dream.' Besides that, the Sultan of the Indians is so square, and the people are all such good boys, that everybody does the right thing, and there are no courts in the country."

When he heard that, O'Herrin said, "His letter shows he's a wise one," and O'Herrin was puffed up because his Indian joblots wanted to

## **SINBAD'S SIXTH ADVENTURE**

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be friends, and he gave Sinbad some more presents and sent him home. I wonder what he did with the beaut from Beautville. I suppose he handed her a number and a shakedown in the harem, and forgot about her.



## SINBAD'S SEVENTH ADVENTURE

**A**FTER old Sinbad's sixth tour he was willing to quit. He said he'd run in his last rhinecaboo, and was going to settle down and join the church: he was getting too old to stand any more of the shipwreck and castaway business. He spent most of the time then on his place, chinning with the hired man or sitting around on the veranda in his slippers, and he got fat and lazy.

But one day the mayor of the town — he was O'Herrin Alraschid — sent a messenger-boy for him, and when he hiked over to the mayor's office, O'Herrin said to him, "Say, Skinbad, it's time I sent a letter and a present back to the King of the Indians, and I want you to take them for me."

That hit Sinbad hard, and he said to O'Herrin: "Well, of course, if you give the word,

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I'll go" — he couldn't do anything else, you know: O'Herrin was the whole thing in that town; he was Bagdad's big man — "but I'm not as young and rampageous as I used to be fifty or a hundred years ago, and I've had plenty tough times already. Besides that, I took an oath I'd never leave town again." And he told O'Herrin all about his other trips.

But when he got through, O'Herrin said: "Well, doctor, you've been up against it some, and that's no lie. But you'll have to swear in for just one more term. All you'll have to do is to slide down to Saradub Island or wherever that place is, and pitch the present and the letter into his Indian nobs, and then wobble back. Expenses'll all be paid. But I've got to get back at that Indian; I can't be owing a high-toned guy like that anything."

So Sinbad went. O'Herrin gave him two thousand dibs for the trip, and he took the first steamer. When he waltzed in on the King of the Indians, his Indian jags said:

"Why, h-a-lloo, Sinbad. I was thinking of you just last night after supper. And I've

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thought of you a heap since you was here. Glad to see you. Take the rocker, and put your feet on the table, and I'll order up some tea."

He gave Sinbad the high hand-shake, and when Sinbad dumped O'Herrin's letter and present into his lap, he was pleased as a basket of chips. The letter went something like this:

"How d' do in the name of the Chief Pilot of The Correct Way, to the Great and Happy King of the Indians, from Abdallah O'Herrin Alraschid, K. C. B., K. G., K. C. M. G., who got the best job there was, just like his father and his grandfather and all the rest of the family who went ahead of them:—

"We were glad to get your letter, and we send this to you from the mayor's office, the hang-out of Superior Wits. We hope when you take a peep at it you'll sabe our position and find it O. K. Ta ta."

O'Herrin's present was a pippin, and I guess it made good for his bluff that he was the only first-class, genuine, registered, all-gold caliph

## SINBAD'S SEVENTH ADVENTURE

in the biz, and the holder of the belt. There was a full set of rags of gold, worth a couple of thousand plunks; fifty robes of the richest kind of stuff and one hundred more of the finest white cloth, bought at Cairo and Alexandria and Suez and several other places at bargain-counter prices; and a swell crock made out of agate, on the bottom of which was a bas-relief figure of a guy shooting arrows at a lion.

After a day or so Sinbad got permission from the Indian king to skip back home, and he secured a berth on a return steamer to Bagdad, and left, the King of the Indians loading him down with presents.

But he didn't get back to Bagdad right away. Nit. The ship bucked into a bunch of pirates, and the pirates gathered it in. Some of the ship's push tried to run the strong arm on the pirates, and the pirates did them, but Sinbad was too foxy for that. He and a lot more wise guys saved their bacon by springing up the sponge before the unpleasantness opened.

Well, the pirates took them to an island and sold them as slaves. Sinbad was knocked down

## HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS

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to a man in the ivory business, and that duck asked him if he could shoot with a bow and arrow.

"Can I?" said Sinbad. "Well, my friends used to so remark. I had the archery record at Sullivan's gallery in Bagdad for several seasons. I used to nail the jack-rabbit and the moke's eye and the leaping kangaroo nine times out of ten."

"All right, Mike," the ivory man said. "You're right in line then with the work I've got cut out for you."

Then he carted Sinbad out to a big forest on an elephant and stuck him up in a big tree, with a bow and arrows, and told him to shoot the elephants that blew by there. He gave Sinbad some grub, and Sinbad stayed all night in the tree.

In the morning, a big band of elephants shacked up, and Sinbad biffed away at them with his little bow-arrow-gun, like a Sioux Indian. He was good at that, and he landed on one of the elephants where it lived, and it went down.

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Then he footed it to town and reported to the ivory man, and the ivory man went back with him, and helped him dig a hole to bury the elephant in. The ivory man's scheme was to wait till the elephant rotted, and then thresh out its teeth and tusks, and take them home to his store.

Sinbad held that job down for two months, and he got an elephant or two every day. He perched first in one tree and then another, and whenever the elephants came along he popped arrows into them. He got so in time that he could pin an elephant's ears together, or put an arrow in the end of its tail every throw, and he gobbled all the prizes at the archery tournaments in town.

But there came a day, one fine morning, when all the elephants in the country collected under his tree. Usually, when he began to distribute arrows free of charge, the elephants didn't loiter around, but scooted right along as if they were going somewhere, and there was never many of them in sight. But the country just oozed elephants that morning, and they swarmed all over

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the place. It was the finest line of elephants Sinbad had ever seen. They blew in from every direction, and they pranced up to the tree as if they had a date there; and they roared and bellowed and squealed like Hades with the blower off; and tromped around till the earth shook so Sinbad was pretty near seasick; and there was blood in the eyes of every elephant in the flock, and every one of them glared straight at Sinbad.

Sinbad saw they were there to do business with him, and his hair hopped up on end, and he turned a few shades pale.

"Holy Mary Ellen!" he said. "Old Jimmy Hardluck is after me again. This gang is out for my scalp. I won't be much comfort to my friends when they get through with me."

Well, the biggest elephant in the bunch floated up to the tree, after about forty thousand elephants had pulled in and presented their credentials, and jerked the tree up by the roots and pitched it on the ground.

Sinbad got a considerable fall then. But the elephant didn't walk all over him as he expected.

## SINBAD'S SEVENTH ADVENTURE

Nit. It picked him up and handed him a seat on its back.

That was a surprise? Well, I guess. Sinbad thought he was dreaming. He wouldn't have given two cents for his chance when the elephant buckled into the tree, and now he had an opera-box on the elephant's neck, with his feet tucked under its ears just as if he owned the whole herd.

What do you think the elephants did next? Well, they formed up into marching order, and the elephant with Sinbad on his neck took the lead, and the first lieutenant said, "Right by fours," and the non-coms said, "Hep, hep," and the whole works went out of there keeping good time.

Maybe old Sinbad didn't feel swelled up, perched up on the collar-button of the big boss elephant of the bunch, with forty thousand elephants trailed out behind down the road. He didn't know whether he was going to jail or where, but you can bet he was moving along in state wherever he was headed for, and that was an escort for your life. The procession



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stretched a hundred and fifty-nine blocks; and when Sinbad looked over his shoulder he couldn't see the tail of it — only the dust and a banner or two, and the sun sparkling on the rear helmets.

"Oh, Maria," he said, "this is the hottest game I ever played in. I'll bet a cold bottle this beats any Dewey parade that ever came down the pike."

Well, the elephants marched away back into the woods, while Sinbad fanned himself with his hat, and remarked it was always hot on parade days, and wondered what kind of trouble was ahead. They bumped into a big open space after awhile, and the boss elephant reached up with his trunk, and dumped Sinbad on the ground. And then they had a dress review and speeches and the Declaration of Independence, and the orator of the day said that the celebration was an entire success in every respect. After that the parade was dismissed, and the forty thousand elephants screwed their nuts for home, and left Sinbad alone. That's right.

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"Well, I'll be good and damned," Sinbad said, when he caught his breath.

Then he looked around, and he began to catch on. As far as the eye could see, and a block or so better, that open space was littered up with elephants' bones. There were heaps, piles, bunches, bundles, and eighty-acre fields of them, for that was the elephants' graveyard. Yes, sir; and when an elephant got ready to die, he went there, or his friends put him on a dray and hauled him there, and he died. Sinbad tumbled right off that the elephants had observed that their teeth and tusks were in demand, and that he was in the bow-and-arrow trade to get them; and so they had put him on to a better thing to keep their hides whole.

That was close observation, eh? And clever deduction? You have heard of the elephant's sagacity, Charlie? I guess that was it? You've been told some tall stories on that score, but that leads them all just a little, eh? Well, I should twitter.

After Sinbad figured up how many millions a trust that was sharp and on to its job could

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make out of the ivory bunched up there, he went and told the ivory man all about everything.

The ivory man had been in the forest and seen the uprooted tree and the bow and arrows on the ground, and he thought Sinbad was very dead long before that; so he got a surprise when Sinbad waltzed in. But Sinbad took him to the elephants' graveyard, and when it hit him what a love of an ivory proposition he was up against, he set Sinbad free, and told him he'd make him rich.

He said to Sinbad: "I didn't tell you this, but we've had dozens and dozens of fellows killed at your job."

"You don't say!" Sinbad said.

"I didn't pull this on you before because I thought it might make you nervous," said the ivory man.

"How nice!" said Sinbad.

"Yes; we tried all kinds of schemes to protect them, but the elephants got them all sooner or later. Of course, we thought they'd get you, too."

"Well! well!" said Sinbad.

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"Yes; but you had too much luck. That's a sign you're a brainy one, and I'm going to take you into business," said the ivory man.

"Good, old man," Sinbad chirruped.

Then Sinbad understood why the elephants didn't waltz all over his diaphragm, and serve him up in fritters, which he thought was more in their style; and that was another proof what smart boys they were. You see, they knew that killing him wouldn't keep some other guy from taking his job.

Well, the ivory man established the biggest ivory business in the country out of that elephants' graveyard, and he bought a ship and loaded it up with choice ivory, and gave it to Sinbad, and sent him home to Bagdad rich and happy.

When Sinbad toddled into O'Herrin Alraschid's office, O'Herrin said he'd been worrying about him; and when Sinbad unloaded his adventures, O'Herrin called in all the newspaper boys, and they made swell stories with spread-heads out of them; and O'Herrin had seventeen copies of the papers filed in the official records.

## **HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS**

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And that was old Sinbad's last time out, and, so far as I know, nobody ever touched his record for a fast and furious life in his own peculiar way.

## THE PORTER AND THE LADIES OF BAGDAD

**S**AY, Charlie, there was a porter there at Bagdad that bumped into a good thing one day. He was waiting for a job, and a swell girl blew along, and told him to grab up his basket and go with her. She took him all round town to about forty stores, and loaded him up with a jug of wine, and a lot of peaches and quinces and apricots and oranges and citrons and all kinds of fruit, and a half-dozen bouquets of lilies and myrtles and roses and chrysanthemums, and twenty-five pounds of meat, and a few bunches of sassafras and cucumbers and capers and pickles, and a lot of walnuts and peanuts and butternuts and chestnuts, and a few boxes of confectionery and bags of cream-cakes, and a couple of fishes, and a pile of cloves and musk and ginger and Indian spices, and a big chunk

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of ambergris, and a lot more stuff, till he could hardly walk.

When his back was nearly broken, he said, "Excuse me. But if you'd said you needed a horse, I'd have got one."

But the dame said, "Oh, I'd just as soon have a donk;" and he made her a bow and said that was one on him, and the girl took him home to a high-toned house with four ivory columns and a brass-bound door.

Her sister, another good-looker, opened the door and piloted them into an inside court, where there was an amber throne fricasseed with diamonds and pearls, and a marble fountain with a copper lion. Still another sister, and a better looker yet, hopped off the throne and helped dump the provisions; and then they paid the porter off.

Well, he was a sharp young guy, and it was easy to catch on a big eat was coming; so he hung around till they asked him what he was waiting for; and then he told them that he always understood that it took four to make a dinner-party, and that he hadn't seen any men

## THE LADIES OF BAGDAD

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around there; and so he'd like to stay and do the chaperon act or something for them. Well, instead of firing him for his nerve, they let him stay.

The dame who was perched on the throne was named Zobedee or Chickadeedee or something, and the other girls' names were Sofie and Amy. Zobedee was the boss, and they lived alone together, and had good times.

But before they let the porter stay, they made him promise to ask no questions whatever happened, and made him read a sign pinned to the copper lion, which said, "Mind your own business, or you'll get it in the neck."

Well, the girls and the porter had a great time at the feed; and about 10 p. m. three flubdubs, who had their hair and beards and mustaches and eyebrows shaved off, and were all shy one lamp, blew up to the house, and gave the brass door a bang. Amy went to the door and came back with a grin on her mug, and said the three guys were mendicants and had just hit the town, and wanted to know if they could get a shakedown for the night. Zobedee



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had them brought in, and swore them not to fire off any questions, and showed them the sign on the copper dog.

Then, while these shavy-headed freaks were cracking nuts and wolfing ambergris, Caliph O'Herrin Alraschid and his grand vizier and boss eunuch showed up. They'd been out looking at the town, and old O'Herrin was curious about the lights. The G. V. said they were Reubens come to town, and had missed their hotel, and were looking for a bed; and they were taken in, too, with the same agreement, after they had read the dog-sign and subscribed the oath.

After this, the one-eyed guys sang and danced, and the grand vizier did a handspring or something; and everybody ate and filled his skin for an hour or so. Then Zobedee jumped up and ordered the tables carried out and the place swept up, and said to the other girls, "It's up to us to do our act now."

Well, Amy and Sof brought in a couple of she-spaniels then, and Zobedee gave them a horrible beating with a club. The dogs howled a

## THE LADIES OF BAGDAD

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lot, and the dame threw her arms around them and did a cry; and then she took them away.

That performance made old O'Herrin Al-raschid so curious he couldn't see, and while the girls were out, he and the freaks put the porter up to asking Zobedee why she thumped the dogs. The G. V. said nit to that, but they voted him down.

Well, that question didn't make Zobedee very mad; it only threw her into a fit. She said, "You're a nice lot of flubdubs for a lady to give a feed to. You're a big set of liars, and you'll get it in the neck all right now."

Then she clapped her hands, and seven big colored mugs rushed in and threw that push on the floor and swung up their skimiters to soak them. That gang was frightened good. They squirmed around on the floor like a lot of eels, and they made all kinds of promises to do better if Zobedee'd let them go just that once. But Zobedee told the nigs to go ahead and butcher them.

It looked like the caliph was down and out, but Amy chipped in just then and gurgled that

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it would be lots of fun to find out how the three shaved marks lost their lamps, and then Zobedee changed her mind.

She let the push up, and made every one of them spring a yarn about his life. The porter led off, the one-eyed jays followed, and O'Herrin and his crowd brought up the rear. When they were done, Zobedee fired them all into the street, and ordered them to sneak.

Well, O'Herrin was pretty sore. But it was his own fault he got himself thrown down and stepped on by a moke, and he couldn't kick.

But the next day he had the porter and the bunch of freaks and the dames all rounded up at his place, and made Zobedee tell about the dogs.

Well, Zobedee said that she had two half-sisters (beside Amy and Sof) when the game opened, and that they all had some dough, left by their pop. The two half-sisters got married right off, and went to Africa. Then their husbands got in and blew their dough; and they got divorced and waltzed back to Bagdad, and Zobedee took them in.

## THE LADIES OF BAGDAD

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Pretty soon they said they thought they'd take a second whirl at marriage, just to ease things up for Zoby. Zobedee said for them not to worry about her. But she tumbled they wanted to get married, anyway, and she said: "You girls surprise me, after the way you got done. You know a husband that's any good is a very rare goat."

But they got married once more for luck, just the same; and got skinned the second time, and came back to Zobedee again. Then pretty soon they dragged her into a scheme to go trading to the Philippines or some place. So she bought a ship, and they all got aboard, and pulled out over the waters blue.

The first port they hitched up at was a petrified town. Yes, Charlie; everybody there was petrified, except the king's son, a young skate who was too soft for the thing to work on him. Zobedee took a stroll down-town, and she found the fellows in the club windows and the hack drivers and the trolley-car conductors and the cops on the corner and everybody else petrified hard as cobblestones. There were ossified men

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all over the village, and the queen was sitting on her throne, wearing a gold crown big as a saucepan and petrified to her own taste.

Zobedee took the crown and a big diamond that was lying around loose, and went on. She found the young guy that the ossification wouldn't take on, in the next room, reading the Koran; he couldn't get anything else to read after the papers stopped. She gave him a bundle of *War Crys*, and they got to be good friends.

Well, his princelets told her that all the people of that place used to worship the sun and a giant named Nardoun or Muldoon or something of that sort, and that on every Washington's birthday, for three years, some wise slob put up a notice that if they didn't cheese it, they'd get petrified. Well, they waited for the house to fall on them, and after the third and last call a cold wave settled down and ossified the town. The young plug played golf and wore shirt-waists, and the wave skipped him.

He said the town was plenty dull after it got against that wave and the gang got turned into

## THE LADIES OF BAGDAD

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rocks. So he married Zoby just to get away from there, and they pitched a lot of coin and jewelry and goods into her ship, and hit the Japan current for Bagdad.

Zobedee thought she was doing well to get a prince like that at the drop of the hat, especially with the record he had as a non-ossifiable boy. But her half-sisters got jealous, and fired her and the Prince of Rocktown overboard, and the princelet got drowned, and she was washed on to a desert island.

About that time, a snake with wings came staggering along, with another snake hanging to its tail trying to swallow it. Zoby had a kind heart, and she smashed the other snake's head with a rock, and the winged racer flew away knocking its heels together.

Well, that snake with wings was a fairy; and the fairy turned Zobedee's two half-sisters into those spaniels, and freighted them and Zoby and all Zoby's goods back to Bagdad; but she didn't think it worth while trying to save young Rockville's corpse.

Before she jumped the game then, she gave

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Zobedee orders to give the spaniels a hundred cracks with a club every day, for throwing her and the soft boy into the wet; and Zobedee had been doing that right along ever since, though she didn't like the job. The fairy threatened to change her into a pug, or something, if she didn't obey orders, and that kept her up to the work.

Well, that story satisfied old O'Herrin's curiosity. But he wanted to know the fairy's telephone number, and when Zobedee fetched her fairylets in by burning a lot of hair, while the grand vizier and the boss eunuch held their noses, he asked her to change the spaniels back into women.

Just to oblige O'Herrin, she did that; and those girls turned out to be good-lookers, too.

Then O'Herrin thought he had to do something grand to square his behavior the night before; and so he married Chickadeedee himself, and made his son marry Amy, and the three freaks marry Sofie and the two half-sisters, who promised to be good. The porter got a bid

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to everything and a check on the bank, and when the fun was over he shook his basket and bought an express-wagon and a couple of mules, and went portering in better style.



## THE STORY OF THE FIRST BLIND MENDICANT

**T**HOSE one-eyed mendicants all saw a little of life. The first one said he was a king's boy, and that when he grew up, his dad used to let him slide down to his uncle's place in Arkansaw or the Transvaal or wherever it was, on a visit once in awhile. His uncle was a king, too, and used to take him around and show him the sights, and give him a good time whenever he showed up. Once he blew over to his uncle's when his uncle had gone hunting, and he lay around the palace about a week waiting for him to get back.

Well, while he was doing that he lost his home. That's right! His dad died, and the prime minister pinched the kingdom. The mendicant didn't hear anything about it, of course, because there were no wires in those days; and

## THE FIRST BLIND MENDICANT

I guess they forgot him, anyway, in the general confusion. The prime minister scooped everything, and gave orders for the arrest of his mendicants as soon as he came back.

"Pull the old king's kid just as quick as he rings the bell; he's too fresh, anyway, and I've got an old grudge to settle with him; I want him bad," the P. M. said to the gang around the palace, and they peeled their eyes and lay for the boy.

Getting his kingdom scooped was something that happened to the best of kings in those "Arabian Nights" times. Just as soon as a king died or went out of the shop for a few minutes, some nervy guy jumped the place.

The young skate got weary waiting for his uncle after awhile, and blew home; and when he wobbled the garden path the palace push hooked on to his royal nobs.

Some slob took him by the neck, and his princelets whoops: "Here! Drop the oyster! What are you doing? You've got a nerve, to lay your paws on a royal prince."

## HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS

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"Royal prince?" the palace mark said. "Oh, that makes nix. That's no good now."

"No good now? Why not?" his mendicants coughed.

"Oh, nothing much. You've been touched; that's all," the cop answered him.

"Been touched?" said the young guy.

"Yes; touched — for the crown, for the throne, for the palace, for the royal baton. See? The governor's croaked, and the grand vizier's swiped the whole works. He's It now, and you're not so much any more; and we're going to take you in to see him, and you'll have a nice time, I guess; nit," the cop said.

"Hully gee," his mendicants yelled. "Pa's dead, and I'm touched for everything — for the palace and the royal baton and everything. I'll never get another royal bat on; it's all off with Josie."

When the palace push heard him say that, they chased him in to the grand vizier on the run.

Then he was against it strong. For the chief rooky, who, just then, was trying the boy's pop's

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throne, had it in for the boy; because, when his princelets was a kid, one day he was out shooting birds with a sling-shot, and he missed a mocking-bird he was after and banged the old goat in the eye with a rock, and put his eye out. He was sorry, and he told the G. V. so, but the old mark was always grumpy about it, and when they fetched him in now, the old throne-stealer hopped down and poked one of his eyes out. That's how his mendicants lost the one eye everybody asked him about.

The grand vizier said: "I guess I'll get square with you now, all right, you're so handy with your little putty-blower."

Then he ordered the push to put his royal princelets in a box, and told two mugs to pack the box out into the woods; and sent a guy along with an axe to do his mendicants when they got him there. That was a frosty day for that son of a late king.

But he pulled through. It's better to have your luck with you than a pocketful of dough.

The axe-man had liver complaint or something, and his heart failed him. When they

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got out into the overskirts he stopped the procession, and they opened up the deep-sea-going box, and he ordered the ex-heir apparent to get out and sneak.

He said to Willie: "Pull your freight out of here, now; I'm not up to my work this morning. This axe is dull, anyway. But don't ever come back any more, or you'll go shy your nut. See? That G. V. is a hard-boiled bad man, and if he knew I fell down this way, he'd have me fried. Skip, now, and get a hurry on."

Well, his royal rabs said he'd never forget him, and then he lit out on the dead. He went to his uncle's town, and he told his uncle what had happened; and his kinglets was pretty hot under the collar when he heard the news.

He said to the boy: "I'll go and take a fall out of that prime minister that'll fracture every bone he's got. He won't steal any bases on me. I'll make him look like ten cents' worth of dog-meat. Watch me."

Then he telephoned the secretary of war, and got all the main guys together; and they

## THE FIRST BLIND MENDICANT

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planned a big campaign against that old grand vizier.

But while they were blowing smoke into each other's eyes, and saying, "Canned beef for the army? — nit; nothing but turkey." "Hit him when he isn't on; that's the stuff." "We'll back him off the road, all right," and getting off that kind of talk, a lot of the outside guards came rushing in with the news that the old G. V. was blowing up the line with a big army, only half a mile from town, and that he said he was going to pinch the uncle's kingdom, too.

When the uncle heard that, he got red in the face and puffed up a lot. But there was nothing yellow about him. He sent about forty guys out right away to tell the G. V. that he was coming out to kick his pantalettes up on top of his scalp-lock, and then he slammed his war-paint on, and took his army and chased out to meet him.

Well, there was the biggest kind of a scrap. It was lovely cards for awhile, and the young prince thought he was going to get his place back, and have the P. M. cooked up for supper.

## **HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS**

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But his uncle got killed right in the middle of the row, when everything was coming in to him strong; and then the grand vizier's army got its second wind, and pushed everybody over on the road and danced into town, looking for a chance to steal something; and his mendicants had to get into a cellar to keep from getting nabbed.

The boy was in that cellar for two weeks, and the only way he could get away was to shave his nut and his mug and his eyebrows, and turn himself into a mendicant. He did that, and sneaked out one dark night and caught a freight for Bagdad. Then he bumped into those other two mendicants, you remember; and he met up with O'Herrin Alraschid, and O'Herrin put him on his feet again. I wonder why old O'Herrin didn't back him with a bunch of Rough Riders for a go against that old grand vizier; that would have been the play for his dough.

## THE STORY OF THE SECOND BLIND MENDICANT

**T**HAT second blind mendicant had a few gaudy troubles and a hard-luck story. He was a prince, and he had a lulu of an education: he could speak Arabic like a Barbary pirate; had the Mussulman prophets by heart, and could write a copper plate fist. The Sultan of the Indians sent for him to come do some writing for him, and he started for the Indian's place. But a bunch of robbers skinned him of everything but his clothes, and trunned him loose in a desert. After that, he hoofed it for two weeks; hit a big, strange town where he didn't know anybody, and bumped into a barber at a bar. I don't know how that last thing happened. All the barbers are usually in church. Well, the barber told him to keep it shady who he was, because the king of that man's town had it in



## HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS

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for his royal pop. So he took the name of Brown or something, and got a job chopping wood in the hills, so as to get his fare home.

One day, when he was doing the wood-chopper act, he tripped over a trap-door in the woods, and he pulled it up and went down a gold stairway into a swell palace lit up with electric lights in red globes; and he was floating along marble halls with jasper pillars when he met the peachiest kind of a dame.

The dame gave him a hard look, and then she said, "Man or genie?"

"What? Me?" he said. "I'm a man. There's no genie about me."

Then the dame asked him how he blew in there, and he told her he fell in the trap-door. Well, that lady was a genie's wife. She was a princess; and he'd pinched her from her royal pa, old King Epileptics or something. She lived in the palace all by her lonely, and after the mendicant told him who he was, she gave him a bid to dinner.

The genie had kept the dame cooped up in that palace for ten years, and she was sick of

## THE SECOND BLIND MENDICANT

her job; and while they were eating, she told the mendicant how mean she'd been treated. She did the work well, and got him all ribbed up against the genie. Then, when the wine came on, it swelled the princelet's head and made him feel big, and he got brave and said he'd give the genie a bump.

When he said that, the genie's wife coughed in her handkerchief, and said he mustn't talk too loud, because if the genie heard him it might cause hard feelings. At that, his mendicants spread himself out, and said the dame had been buried alive too long and needed a week off; and that he thought he'd get right in then and give it to her.

"How do you get this slob of a genie here, anyway, when you need him?" he howled.

The dame showed him a big crockery talisman on a post, and told him she gave that a push whenever she wanted the genie. Then his mendicants picked up his axe, and said he'd show her how to put a few dents in that talisman and give the genie a surprise. The genie's wife did her best to head him off, but the grape had

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got to him too hard. He said he could lick any genie that ever breathed, and that he'd lick that one or resign the belt; and that nothing would do for him but a finish go. Then he hammered that crock of a talisman to pieces in about a minute.

Just about the time the chunks hit the floor, the palace rocked and shooked like there was an earthquake, and there was lightning and thunder till you couldn't rest. There was a wild time just then. The genie's wife was frightened stiff, and it didn't take his mendicants over ten ticks to get sober, either. Did he stay and lick the genie? Not on your life! He fled up the golden stairs on the dead, and scooted home to the tailor's, leaving the dame to explain.

Well, the genie blew in; found the axe; had a plain talk with his wife, and then came hooping down the street looking for his mendicants. He was slightly wrathful, I should remark. He saw the tailor, and the tailor, like an ass, told him the axe belonged to his royal nobs. So the genie nabbed his mendicants under the bed, and said, "You're the skate that broke the talis-



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## THE SECOND BLIND MENDICANT

man, eh? Well, I'll fix you good and plenty;" and he changed him into an ape, and left him on top of a mountain.

I guess that was a tough situation. But after the mendicant got used to himself, he slid down the mountain and got on to a ship. He thought he'd go somewhere. The captain saw him coming, and said, "I choose that," and took him to New York or some other big seaport.

Well, the grand vizier of the place he went to had died lately, and the king was looking for a new man, and one that could write. There wasn't a guy in that town could write to please him. So a palace plug was knocking along the dock with a roll of paper for everybody to write on, when his ship waltzed in.

His mendicants got in line with the rest, and some mark noticed him, and said, "Give the monk a chance;" and he took the pen and wrote six verses of "Annie Laurie" in a hand that was up to the limit. When the ship's push saw his writing, they fell dead, and when the king got the roll, he said, "Send the skate here that wrote this. Here's a bloke that can write."

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His kinglets gave orders to dress his mendicants up in a swell suit of clothes, and fetch him up to the palace on the best horse in the stables. The push began to laugh when they heard that, and the king said, "What are you mugs hahaing about?" And then they told him his mendicants was an ape.

"An ape!" the king said. "Hully gee! Well, fetch him up, anyway. I guess he'll do for a grand vizier."

Well, when the town heard that the sultan had made a grand vizier of a monkey, they said it was all right, and that it would even up things; he'd made monkeys of so many grand viziers. So they piloted the monk up to the palace horseback in grand style, in a procession a mile long, and the whole town was out on the sidewalks to see him go by. When his mendicants went by, the people remarked: "He's a deep-looking bird." "I'm for the monk." "He's the boy for my dough;" and his mendicants said to himself, "What a pudding, if I wasn't an ape."

Then when they hit the palace, his mendicants waltzed in to the king, who was on his throne,

## THE SECOND BLIND MENDICANT

attended by all the main guys, and made three kowtows and kissed the ground, which was the regulation sultan's salute; and after that he took a seat and tried to look like a man. Well, that paralyzed the gang. They couldn't make out how he was so wise; he was the brightest monk they'd ever bumped into. "Looks like he'd been a grand vizier before; maybe this is his second job," some skate said.

The sultan was astonished for sure; and when the levee was over, he invited the princelet in to dinner with him. The monk took a seat at the table, and used his napkin and the finger-bowl and the forks with as much dog as the Prince of Wales. But when he was hitting the wine, he took care not to fall off the water-wagon again, like he did in the genie's joint.

Well, he made a big hit as a grand vizier, and he had a soft snap in the sultan's palace. He used to beat the sultan playing checkers, and then, when his royal nobbs got grouchy, he'd let him win two or three games, so he wouldn't get mad and fire him. He wanted to hang on to



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the grand vizier's graft, for that was a first-class position.

But one day the sultan's daughter blew in to see the sultan, and when she spied the monk, she pulled down her veil, and said: "Oh, pa, why did you let me come in here where there's a man?"

"A man?" the sultan said. "Go on! There's nobody here but me and the grand vizier," and he looked around the room at the monk.

But the princess said his mendicants was a man, and had been enchanted by a genie. She knew that, because she was a magician herself, and had seventy rules of magic up her sleeve. She knew every enchanted guy at first sight, and who enchanted him and how much he got for the job. She said she could transport the sultan's palace to Hongkong or Chicago in one jump; and that his mendicants was a prince.

When she got through, his royal jags said: "Well, never mind about moving the palace to Chicago. But if you can change the monk into a man again, get a move on and do it; and

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then you can marry him, because he's the swiftest grand vizier ever I had."

So the princess took the sultan and his mendicants and the boss eunuch into the garden; stood them up on one side; drew a ring around herself, and started in on the disenchantment. Then there were doings.

The genie who fixed the prince suddenly showed up as a lion, and made a reach for Mary. She turned herself into a cleaver and cut the genie in two. His head changed to a scorpion, and the cleaver turned into a snake, and went for it. The scorp changed to an eagle, and the snake changed to a bigger one, and chased him out of the yard. Then the genie blew up out of the ground as a cat, and the princess was right on his heels as a wolf. She snapped at him, and he turned into a worm and crawled into an apple. The apple swelled up and burst, and the seeds went all over the place. At that, the princess changed to a rooster, and went to gobbling the seeds. One of the seeds got away, and rolled into the river and turned into a fish; and Mary had to turn into a bigger fish and go after it.

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"Say, this is the greatest game," the monk said to himself. But about that time, the genie and the princess came out of the water as a couple of fire-pillars, and the genie blew the flames over his mendicants and the other two guys; and before the princess could shoo him away, the sultan's beard was burned off, the boss eunuch was smothered, and the monk lost an eye.

The fight didn't last long after that. The genie was cremated, and the princess win out. But she was cooked to a fare ye well.

Before she croaked, she grabbed up a cup of water; threw some of it on the monk, and said, "Monkey, monkey, bottle of beer. How many monkeys are there here? One, two, three, out goes he;" and his mendicants was a man again.

Then Mary fell in a heap of ashes, and the boss eunuch being too dead to say "Hurrah," there wasn't much of a celebration.

His mendicants felt good, barring his bad eye, but the sultan was sore for fair. He said his mendicants was a smart guy if ever he saw one, but if he'd known what a hoodoo he was, he wouldn't have fooled with him. He didn't want

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to hurt the young skate, but he could hardly keep his hands off him; so he told him to jar loose and pull his freight. The prince was on his uppers again then; and he shaved his mug and his nut, and blew up to Bagdad as a mendicant, and got a job at O'Herrin Alraschid's palace along with those two other one-eyed freaks.

## THE STORY OF THE THIRD BLIND MENDICANT

**T**HAT third guy of a one-eyed mendicant was no victim of Fortune; he had chance enough if he'd held on to it. But he was like some of these multi-millionaires; there was no limit to his wants. When everything was coming to him in carriages, he didn't have sense enough to hold himself down. He had to reach for something he didn't need. Well, he got it all right — all the side-dishes and everything.

He went down the line one day, looking for a job or something, and came to a red copper palace; and he said to himself, "This must be where the Copper King lives," and stopped to take a look.

While he was rubbering, ten young skates, every one of them shy one lamp, came parading out the front door, and when they spotted him,

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they rushed up and shook hands and said they were glad to see him.

They must have tumbled that he was next, though he was a prince and he had a good pair of eyes then. But when he saw them, he said to himself:

“Suffering Solomon! Where’d all the one-eyed boys come from?”

Well, the one-eyed boys invited him inside; and they took him into a big room in the copper palace where there were ten little blue sofas, and every one of them squatted on a sofa. Then they told him to take a seat on the floor and make himself comfortable; and when he did that, one of them said:

“But no questions go. See? This is no coroner’s inquest nor Bible-class, and we’re not here to tell every guy that comes along how we went shy an eye. So think of something else.”

Well, his royal princelets was dying to know what happened those mugs. But he had to keep his jaw tied when he heard that; and they had dinner and talked the races till 11 P. M.

Then an old mark with a white beard fetched

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every one of those one-eyed skates a little bowl full of ashes and coal-dust and lamp-black, and they made a face-powder of that stuff, and rubbed it all over their faces; and then they beat themselves on the nut, and hammered their breasts and wept for further orders. They looked like a bunch of stokers with a crying drunk on; and every once in awhile they all sang together:

“Oh, we do this because we like it. Nit. This is just because we’re a lot of lobsters. We had a good thing, and we didn’t know it. We had the earth by the bosom of the pants with a down-hill drag, but that wasn’t enough. We wanted the fence painted and shellacked. If, we had the dough we’d hire a steam-kicker. Oh, we are the original ten chumps, all right.”

Well, when this thing happened, his royal nobs couldn’t keep his face closed any longer, and he said:

“Say, really, you fellows make me curious, with your one eyes and your little blue cushions and your pot-black and dog-grease and this howl you’re making. I’d give a lot to know

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how you lost that eye apiece. You must have been against something strong."

But those one-eyed crows wouldn't cough up a thing on the subject. They told his rabs it was none of his pie; and that's all they'd say.

They kept that circus up all that night, and the next night they painted themselves up again, and filled their hair full of ashes and howled some more.

Then his nobbs made another spiel to know how they lost their eyes, and after that, one of them said, "It'll cost you an eye to find out."

"Well, I'll give the eye to know," his princelets said.

"All right, Mike; it'll cost you it good and plenty," the one-eyed boy told him. "We can't tell you about this thing, but we can sick you on to it. If that'll suit, we'll do that much for you."

That's all they'd give away. But his mendicants said he was out for a time and game for any kind of trouble; and so they sewed



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him up in a sheepskin, and threw him to the birds.

That is, they dropped him where a lot of those roc-birds used to play, and one of those rocs scooped him up, and dumped him on top of a mountain in front of a big gold-plated castle covered with emeralds and rhinestones; and he cut himself out of the skin, and rang the bell. When they were putting the skin on him, the one-eyed boys tried to talk him out of the scheme, and told him he'd be sorry, but he only asked them to hurry.

Well, the maid at the palace showed him into the parlor, and there were forty girls there, all good-lookers; and they all yelled when they saw him:

"Ah, there, Augustus, we've been waiting for you."

That ought to have been a warning to him, but he was so curious, I suppose it made him kind of feversome.

Those girls owned that castle, and they told him he'd have to marry the bunch and the castle was his. They looked good to him, and he told

### THE THIRD BLIND MENDICANT

them he was for them, and they rushed the marriage through.

Those were a jolly lot of girls, all good fellows, and that guy had a gay time in that castle for a year. At the end of that time, his wives blew up to him one day with the keys to the castle, and told him they were all going away on a visit. They said they hated to go, but they'd be back in forty days.

Well, there was a great big courtyard in that castle, and a hundred gates in it, and every gate opened into a garden or a storehouse; and the girls told the young squeeze he could amuse himself looking over the place while they were gone; he hadn't had time that year. But one of the gates was gold, and they advised him not to rubber into that one, or something would happen him; they said that gate was hoodooed.

Then they threw it into him strong that they'd take the key to it along, only they knew a wise guy like he was would have too much sense to open it, and they didn't want to insult him. They were nice, gentlemanly girls, weren't they?

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Well, the girls skipped, and then it got slow and his jags tackled the gates. Those gardens and warehouses he opened up were great. There was an aviary behind one door that had all the birds on earth in it, and a garden that beat the world behind another, and a house full of diamonds and all the precious stones, and a treasury loaded with gold, and so on, and so on, behind the rest. He finished ninety-nine doors in thirty-nine days, and then he was up to the gold door, and the girls were due to get back the next day.

Well, he thought of the girls, and pulled his whiskers. If he let the gold door slide, he'd be all right, and if he opened it, he didn't know what he'd bump into. So he flipped a nickel and she went tails, and he opened the door.

There was a scent came out of that place knocked him down. That was a warning for him to keep off the grass. But he was a sandy young fellow, and he went right straight ahead.

Behind the gate was a big room, lighted with wax tapers and gold and silver candlesticks, and there was saffron on the floor instead of saw-

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dust. There were a whole lot of fine things in that place, but the thing that took his eye was a big black horse at the other end of the room. It had on a gold bridle and saddle, and there was bird-seed in the feed-box and rose-water in the drinking-trough; and it was easy to see it was a thoroughbred.

He walked around it and sized up its points, and he got so struck with it, he concluded to take it out and try it around the courtyard; and if he liked its pace, he was going to get Tod Sloane to ride for him, and go after the Derby.

Well, he trotted the stepper out to the door; got in the saddle, and said, "Get up."

But the horse didn't budge. Nit. So he gave him a dig with his heel, and when he did that, old Jay Eye See began to roar like the devil, and spread out a pair of wings his princelets had overlooked in the inspection, and flew straight up into the air.

His royal jags got busy then trying to keep from falling off, and the horse flew a long way while he was hanging to its neck. Then it flew

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down to the ground, and gave a shake that switched him off behind; and after that, it handed him a kick in the eye that put his eye out.

Then the horse flew away, and his jiblets got up and spit the dirt out of his mouth. He was feeling pretty sick, and he looked around to see where he was at.

Where do you think he was, Charlie? Right in front of the red copper castle! Fact; and those ten one-eyed boys were all lined up there, rubbering at him with grins all over their mugs. When he spotted them, it hit him how they'd lost their lamps. It did, indeed.

When he saw them, they all said in chorus: "Got a look at the elephant, eh, Mike?" and then they all gave him the hoarse horse laugh. For they'd all been through the mill, Mollie. They'd all had a ride on that horse and got a kick in the eye, and they all knew how it happened.

Well, those guys were very sorry, but they told him the drinks were on him, and he pushed them up to the bar and bought the wine. Then

### THE THIRD BLIND MENDICANT

they offered him one of their little blue sofas and a potful of paint and ashes. But he wouldn't have them. Nit. He was so disgusted with himself that he shaved his head and his face and his eyebrows, and went on the road hoboing as a blind mendicant; and he wandered up to Bagdad, and got into O'Herrin Alraschid's joint with those other one-eyed skates.

## AGAB AND THE FORTUNE - TELLERS

**T**HERE was one lobster in those "Arabian Nights" who made a big name for the fortune-tellers, and he had a lot of fancy adventures, too. His name was Agib or Agab, and he was the son of Cassib, and old Cassib was a king. After old Cassib died, Agab took charge of the business, and the first thing he did was to start out for a look at his kingdom. There were a lot of islands in the invoice, and he got a ship and took a peep at them; and then he got so struck on himself, as a sailor, he concluded to go into the Christopher Columbus business and go discover something. In those "Arabian Nights," kings and everybody else tackled anything that hit their notion, any time, and sometimes they came out winner and sometimes they went shy a few beans.

Agab sailed somewhere for forty days. Then

## THE FORTUNE - TELLERS

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he bumped into a few storms, and when the storms got through with him, he was willing to sail back. But he had a bum pilot on board, and when he gave that guy orders to hit the back trail, he found out that he was lost. So they sailed along any old way for ten days. Then, one morning, the lookout man said there was something black ahead; and when the pilot heard that he began to weep and cry around and say it was all off with them.

"What's up?" Agab asks; and the pilot tells him the black thing is a mountain that's in the habit of drawing every ship up to it that goes by, and pulling the nails and bolts and pots and kettles and all the old iron it has, out of it, and letting it drop to pieces.

"I've discovered a good thing here," Agab says, when he hears that. "I don't think."

"It's got us nailed now," the pilot says, and weeps some more.

"Is that so? Well, what'll happen next?" Agab asks him.

"We'll bust up and go to pieces like a fire-cracker," the pilot says. "All the rods and



## HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS

screws and everything will fly out of the ship and go and stick to the mountain, and there won't be anything to hold the timbers together."

"That'll fix us plenty," Agab' says then. "There must be a few million tons of old iron sticking to that hill. That must be one of these magnetic mountains. I wonder who owns it?"

"That's no magnetic mountain; not on your life," the pilot says. "There's a brass house on top of that mountain, and a brass horse with a brass man on his back on the roof; and there's a lead plate with a charm written on it hanging to the brass guy's neck. As long as he sits up there with that plate on him, the ships that come along here'll get ditched. But whenever some skate throws him down, that'll break the charm."

"*There's* a gilt-edged chance for somebody," says Agab. "I suppose the guy that breaks the charm gets the old iron."

The pilot says yes, and then gets busy weeping again.

The next morning the ship was up close to the mountain, and heading right for it, and Agab and the ship's push saw they were against

## THE FORTUNE - TELLERS

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it; and so everybody willed his property to whoever won out when the smash came.

Agab got a roost in the ship's bow then, and said, "I'm going to see how this thing goes, if I never see anything else on earth."

And when the iron began to shake the ship and start for the mountain, he had a wild time dodging skillets and fire-tongs and pots and nails and things.

"This is great," he said; and about that time the old ship broke up, and he hit the water.

Everybody but him was drowned. He was struggling around, telling himself he was an ass for not copping out a stove or something that would have trolleyed him up to the mountain, when he bumped into a flight of stairs. Those were the only steps around the place, and they led from the water right up to the brass house.

"Nothing could be nicer," Agab says, and tramped up there.

Well, the brass house was open, and he blew in, put the cat out, said "I wonder how much that brass horse cost," and went to bed.

He had a dream that night, Charlie. Yep.

## HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS

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An old guy came to him in the dream, and said, "Listen, Gabby. Dig up the garden near the rose-bush to-morrow, and you'll find a brass bow there and three lead arrows. Those arrows are the thing. See? They were made when there was an eclipse on, and they'll do the trick for the magnetic mountain. Plug the brass mark's plate with them, and he'll tumble into the sea; and you bury the brass horse; and the sea'll swell up to the top of the mountain, and this place'll go out of business. A lead man in a brass boat will blow up and take you where you want to go. Don't say 'God,' though, while you're in the boat."

"That was a great dream," Agab said, when he woke up, and he dug up the bow and arrow and put everything through per schedule. He upset the brass guy into the wet, and buried the brass horse; and the sea swelled up to the top of the hill.

When Agab saw the sea climbing up the mountain, he said, "I guess I don't get the old iron, after all."

But when the lead man came plowing along

## THE FORTUNE - TELLERS

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with the boat, he said, "Well, it doesn't matter. I'll just skip home and collect the stuff those guys left me in their wills."

He didn't like the looks of the lead man. But he went with him. They were ten days in the boat, and the lead man never said a word all that time; then they sighted an island.

"Thank God I'm getting somewhere where I can find somebody to talk to," Agab said then, and when he said that the lead man and the boat went down. "Damn that lead man," Agab said, and swam to the island.

That was a desert island, and the next morning a ship showed up and a lot of fellows came ashore. Agab didn't know whether they were for him or not, so he climbed a tree. The men dug a lot of dirt off of a trap-door over a hole in the ground, and Agab watched them unload two or three drayfuls of furniture and provisions from the ship and carry them down into the hole. After that an old mark said good-by to a good-looking kid, and the kid went down into the hole; and they shovelled the earth over the

## HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS

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trap-door, and scooted back to the ship and pulled their freight.

"This must be a cyclone island. That kid must have lived in Kansas," Agab said; and then he went and dug up the trap-door and went down to see him. The kid was sitting on the sofa in a swell room, and he gave a start when he saw Agab.

"Don't get scared. I'm a king and a son of a king; I'm no hold-up," Agab said, and he asked the kid what he was doing there.

The kid gave him a great fill. He said his pa was a rich jeweller, and that when he was born a fortune-teller prophesied that he'd get killed when he was fifteen years old. This was to happen about the time the brass man got pushed off his horse into the sea. The fortune-tellers said he was going to get done up by a mark named Prince Agab, the same skate that was to shove the brass man over. He was pretty near fifteen now, and his dad had hid him there to keep him out of Agab's way. If he got past the date those fortune-tellers had fixed for his death, he'd go on living and die of old age.

## THE FORTUNE - TELLERS

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He thought he had a pretty good chance, shut up in that hole, as Agab was probably at Newport or Atlantic City or some place fighting the hot weather.

While he was shooting this at Agab, his princelets was saying to himself, "Here's where the fortune-tellers lose once. I'll not do this kid — there's nothing around here worth having, anyway." And he sized up the furniture, which was cheap stuff. He came pretty near telling the kid that he was Gabby himself, and that he'd knocked the brass man off his horse already; but he thought he'd scare him to death if he did, so he kept still. He told him he was a Pittsburg pickle drummer or something, out of a job, and the kid hired him to stay with him and make things pleasant till after he'd got by the day he was to be killed. His dad was coming back with the ship to get him then, and he promised to get Agab a good position.

Gabby and the boy got along fine together, and by and by the day came on which the fortune-tellers said Agab was to do the kid. The kid was kind of nervous in the morning, but

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when it got around to the afternoon he felt better. He thought the odds were on him, then, and he began to think of getting up a bet with Agab.

But that evening they had watermelons for dinner, and the kid had put the watermelon knife on a shelf over the table; and old Gabby reached for it, got his feet tangled in the tablecloth, and fell on top of him; and the knife ran into the kid and killed him. So the fortune-tellers win out, anyway. Agab held his head in his hands for awhile after that, and felt bad.

"Those fortune-tellers had a sure thing with me," he said.

He didn't know whether to bury the kid or not. So he went outside and took a look around. The first thing he saw was the kid's pop's ship coming for the island. He didn't think it was a good time to bump into the old man; so he hid himself in the tree again. When the kid's pop found the kid was dead, he threw up his hands, and said he knew that's the way it would be.

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Well, they took the kid to the ship and left, and Agab hung around the island till another ship got him and took him home.

Then he collected all the money he'd inherited from the ship's push right away, and he sent a lot of dredges and divers after the iron on that mountain.

But the money he made was nothing to what the fortune-tellers picked up on him. It all got out about how he'd upset the brass man and killed the jeweller's boy just as they'd predicted, and it gave them the biggest kind of a run of business; and they said Agab was the best line they'd ever gone into, and they'd made some good strikes in their time.



## STORY OF THE HONEST MAN

**T**HERE was one guy in those "Arabian Nights" that was too good for this world: he followed his worst enemy around to heap favors on him, instead of having him jailed for his meanness. He made me kind of tired.

Well, this honest man — catch on to the name: "honest man" — and the slob that was his worst enemy lived next door to each other at the start-off. The worst enemy was the "envious man;" that's what Saryzade called him. He was so jealous of the honest skate that it nearly smothered him, and when this honest guy got on to the fact, he jumped up and moved. Yes, Charlie. He tried to be friends first — he did the other mug a few good turns, and was as pleasant as he could be — but the envious bloke was meaner than ever. So he skipped, thinking the other skate might have a change of heart and be good.

## THE HONEST MAN

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He slid over to another town, and went into the monk business. He bought a robe and had his nut shaved, and did the thing up brown. Then, after he got his hand in, he leased a house with cells in it, and chased up a lot of other guys and put them in the cells, and opened a monkery. Then it wasn't long till he had all the monkeries on the East Side faded, and all the old monks had to go West to Sioux City or some place, and start business again. He got a great reputation for being good; and everybody said that when it came to pious goats, he was It.

Well, his reputation got back to the envious flubdub, and it made him sick for three days; it nearly broke his heart. He turned green and went to bed. After while he got up, and said, "I'll just go and see this honest man and kill him. I'll go and interfere with the monk business a little."

So he blew down to the monkery. Well, the honest guy was glad to see him, and he offered him a job pulling weeds around the place. But he said he came on business, and wanted to talk

## HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS

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on the quiet. So they walked in the garden while the other monks were sitting around the cells talking politics. Then the envious flubdub waited till he got the honest up to an old well, and then he gave him the grape-vine twist, and tumbled him into it; and he went away, saying, "I guess I'm done with that mug. They won't worry me to death any more telling me how good he is."

But he missed it; just a little. For that old well was full of genii. A lot of them lived there. But they were invisible, so nobody caught on, and they got the place for nit. The honest guy had them charmed, too, with his goodness, and when he came shooting down the well they caught him and eased him down; and he got no bump to speak of.

"Do you know who this skate is whose nut we just saved?" one of the genii, who lived in the well, asked another who was visiting there.

"Nit," the other genie said.

"Well, this is Billy the Monk. Do you know the other guy that took the fall out of him?"

"Nit."

## THE HONEST MAN

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"He's Mike the Butcher. He's a bad mark. He was so jealous, when this honest guy used to live next door to him, that he was bilious all the time, and Billy here got up and moved just to make it easier for him. And now he came here to do this honest mark because he heard of his reputation.

"Billy's made such a name in the monk business that the sultan is coming here to-morrow to see him about his daughter, the princess," the well genie said.

"What's the matter with the dame?" the other genie asked; and then the honest mark unlatched his ears to hear what was coming.

"Well, I'll tell you," the well genie coughed. "That fresh skate of a genie Maymoon thinks he's in love with the princess, and he hangs around and bothers her and makes her sick. But I know how this good mark can cure her and get rid of his Maybirds. There's a black cat in the monkery with a white tip to the end of her tail. All he's got to do is to pull seven hairs out of the white spot; burn them; smoke the princess's head, and the trick's done."

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Billy the Monk took all that down in a notebook; and the next morning, when he could see better, he crawled out of the well, and went and told the push in the monkery what Mike had done to him.

Then he hunted up the black cat and swiped seven white hairs from her tail.

"Let go me tail," she yelled, and took a spit at him.

But he said: "Never mind, pussy. Go back to your corner. If this scheme those genii put me on to works, I'll buy you six or seven tails."

After that, he lay for the sultan. His sultanettes made the genie's prophecy good. He blew up with the palace gang, and said to the honest skate, "Maybe you know what I'm here for?"

"That's what. You're here to get me to doctor the princess," the honest guy said.

"You're a good guesser," his royal jiblets cooed. "If you're as good at doctoring, you can have anything you want."

Then the honest man said to send for the princess, then, and he'd cure her for sure; and

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the sultan had her brought in with a lot of her ladies in a hurry. He was wild to have her cured.

Billy the Monk gave her a seat in the operating-chair, and the rest of the monk push got towels and basins and stood around holding their noses, while he burned those seven hairs. He touched them off under the princess's nose; and when she began to sneeze and cough, his lover-lets, the genie Mayday, let go all holds, gave howl, and pulled his freight.

"I didn't do much to Maybug," Billy the Monk said, and then the princess pulled off her veil and gave her pop a smile, and said that she felt first-rate.

Well, his sublime portlets was tickled to death, and he turned around to the push, and said: "What's the best thing I can do for this honest skate, to pay him for what he's done for me?"

Some plug, who had a grudge against the honest guy, said, "Marry him to the dame."

"That's just what I thought of doing," the sultan said.

So he married the princess to Billy, and the honest guy turned the monkery over to a fat

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monk he liked pretty well, and went up to the court to live.

He had a gay time at court, for a monk, and in about a year the grand vizier died and he got his place. He was getting a rise in life then. But there was more coming to him. The sultan croaked a couple of years later, and because he had no sons nor brothers nor anything, they held an election; and the monks, who were all solid for the honest guy, got in and Crokerized the town, and made him sultan.

Then was the honest guy's chance to get back at Mike the Butcher. But did he take it? Nit.

One day, when he was out in a procession with the palace gang, he spotted the envious flubdub in the mob on the sidewalk rubbering, and he stopped the parade and rode up to the sidewalk and yelled at him:

"Hello, Mike. Have you pushed anybody into a well lately?"

At that, the envious slob gave a gasp and shook in his boots, and he'd have made a grandstand sneak in a second if he could. But two viziers had him by the wings, and he had to stay and take in the whole concert.

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“ Well, Mike, I’m glad to see you,” his honest nobs says. “ I haven’t given you up yet, and now I think I’ll reform you sure. When they told you Billy the Monk was good people, they were telling you no lies. I’m going to do you some more good now, and I hope it’ll strike in this time.”

Then he ordered the secretary of the treasury and the boss warehouse-man to give the envious mug a thousand cases and twenty loads of groceries, and he sent some of the gang along with Mike to see that he got the dough and the stuff.

That was the end of the story. It didn’t say what became of those two guys finally. But that honest skate was a lobster, all right, all right. He had goodness on the brain. What he ought to have done was to feed that Mike the Butcher to the hogs.



## THE MERCHANT AND THE GENIE

**S**AY, in those "Arabian Nights" days, a fellow was liable to get into trouble any time, without intending to, and a man couldn't be too careful. There was an old merchant who went on a journey, and on his way home he squatted down by a spring, under a weeping-willow, to eat his lunch. He filled up on biscuits and dates, and when he was about through, up jumped a big genie under his lee bow, and said, "Say, get up till I kill you with this skimiter, like you killed my son."

"Who killed your son?" the merchant asked him.

"You did."

"How?"

"Didn't you sit down when you came here?"

"Yep."

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"Didn't you take a lot of dates out of your grip and eat them?"

"Yep."

"Didn't you throw the nuts away?"

"Sure. That's right," the merchant said. He couldn't deny that.

"Then you killed my son. See?" the genie said. "When you were throwing your date-shells around so gay, he was blowing by here, and you flipped one into his eye and killed him."

The genie threw the merchant down and put his foot on his neck, and rolled up his sleeve and spit on his hands and got ready to chop his nut off.

"Ah, wait a minute. Give a guy a chance to speak," the merchant said; and then he argued with the genie that it wasn't his fault if he killed the kid, because he couldn't see him. The kid was invisible when he came sneaking along; so how could he tell he was going to knock his eye out? But the genie said that cut no ice, and lifted up the skimiter again.

Then the merchant saw the genie was going to do him for sure. So he begged him to give

## **HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS**

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him a year to go wind up his business and say good-by to his folks. He promised to come back then; and the genie said all right and let him go.

Well, the merchant skipped home and told his family about the affair; and they all cried and the dog howled and the neighbors came in and said it was too bad the old man had to go back and be killed in a year.

But the merchant had given his word, and he was game to stand by it. He paid his debts, and set his slaves free, and gave a lot of money to the poor, and divided his property among his wife and kids, and appointed guardians for the minors, and selected a cool place in the cemetery to be buried, and at the end of the year he and his folks all did another weep; and then he put his burial-suit in his grip, and pulled out for the place where he was to meet the genie.

On the way there he bumped into two nice old parties — one of them was a sheik — going his way. The sheik had an antelope with him, and the other old skate had a couple of black dogs. They inquired where he was heading

## THE MERCHANT AND THE GENIE

for, and he told them about his trouble with the genie; and they said, "Do tell!" and concluded to jump into the game and see what happened.

The genie was on time. He blew up in a bunch of vapor, and told the merchant to take his collar off so he could get a good swipe at his neck.

Then the merchant and the old guys with the dogs and the antelope began to howl for mercy, and the dog-man and the antelope-man said they'd tell the genie the stories of their lives if he'd let the merchant off.

"All right," the genie said. "Make it brief; and if there's anything in your chin I'll let him go." So the sheik went to work with his jaw.

Says he, "The antelope's my wife. She was my cousin also, and she was only twelve years old when I married her. So I guess I was as much of a father to her as a husband." I suppose he thought he was the whole thing.

Anyway, he said he lived with his wife twenty years; didn't have any children; married another woman and had a boy; and then went away on a journey. That last was a good play on his

## HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS

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part; there was a chance for trouble in that combination.

While he was gone, frou number one (the antelope) turned frou number two and the boy into a cow and a calf by magic, and handed them over to the hired man. Then when the sheik got back, the antelope put him up to slaughtering the cow. But when the sheiklet took a mallet and started for the cow, she belowed and made a horrible noise, and the tears ran down her face, and his heart wouldn't stand for it.

"Go on, you 'fraid cat," his first wife said; "you give me a pain." But he resigned his job to the hired man, and that flubdub butchered the cow.

Then the first wife had the calf waltzed up to be assassinated. The calf got down on his knees and mooed, and did everything he could to show he was no common calf, but a magic one; and it worked on the sheik's nerves till he said, "Take him away. Get me another calf. I can't look this one in the face."

Then the wife chipped in again and said,

## THE MERCHANT AND THE GENIE

"No; this is the right calf. Kill this one. He's fat."

But the sheik told her to go and give the ducks some hay and not get too previous with her advice; and the hired man took the boy down to the meadow.

On the way down he met the dairymaid, and she sprung a laugh when she saw the calf.

"What's the haha about?" the hired man asked her.

"That's no calf; that's a kid," she said.

"Kid nothing. If that's a kid I'm a goat," the hired man said.

"Oh, I'm talking about the old sheik's kid; that's him," the hired girl said; and then she gave the enchantment snap away to the hired man, for she savied magic, too.

Well, the hired man chased himself up to the sheik right away and told him all about it; and the sheik blew down to the corral on the dead, and hugged the calf and wept over him a heap. Then he asked the dairy-girl to change the calf back into a boy. The girl said she'd do it if he'd let her marry the boy

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and do up the antelope for her funny work, and he said it was a go, providing she wouldn't kill the wife.

Right in this place in his yarn, the sheik gave the genie a look, because he wanted him to get that about sparing the dame's life, and then he went on.

Well, the dairymaid poured some water on the calf's nut, and said to him, "If you're a genuine, dyed-in-the-wool, custom-stamped calf, why, go on and be a calf and be blowed; but if you're a boy, why, then, quit making a calf of yourself and be a man," and the calf was a boy again.

He married the dairymaid, and they turned the wife into an antelope instead of giving her to the police, because they wanted to keep her in the family, and now the sheik was travelling for his health. That ended his yarn, and the genie gave a grunt and the other old skate began.

He said the two black dogs were his brothers, and tough citizens, and the genie didn't even look surprised. He said that when their dad

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croaked, the three of them got two thousand plunks apiece, and that one of the two dog brothers took his two thou, and went away for a year trading with the Indians, or somebody, and came back broke. The old guy had stayed home and bought into the coffee trust, and so he gave the brother two more thou, and set him up in business.

The other dog brother went out and tackled the Indians then, and came back in the same fix; and he got the same gentlemanly treatment from the old skate, who was a nice, kind brother, with money for the robins.

Well, pretty soon the two dog brothers wanted the dog man to go in with them and go trading some more. But the dog man said, "Nit. If those Indians took all your dough, they'd probably get my scalp," and he stood them off for two years. Then he gave in, and they fixed up to go on a voyage.

But when it came to subscribing for the capital stock those dog brothers didn't have a nickel. They were stone broke again. Been playing the races some more, I suppose. But that never



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fazed the dog man; he'd have stood for anything. He had twelve thousand plunks left, and he hid half of that in the cellar, and divided the rest equally with his brothers; and they bought a ship together.

Then they went somewhere. I don't know where; but they sold their stuff at a thousand per cent. rise; and then the dog man met a pretty girl on the beach and she asked him to marry her. I don't know what the matter with her head was, but that's what she did. Of course the dog man married her. He was fruit — the bunco man's friend. After that they got aboard their ship, and started for home.

But the dog brothers had been taking another twirl at the bank before they left town, and they were pretty much on the tram again; and they were jealous because the dog man got along so well and always had dough, and pretty girls blew up and asked him to marry them, and all that sort of thing; and so they grabbed him and his wife when they were asleep, and threw them overboard.

Well, that would have been bad, Charlie. But

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the dog man's wife happened to be a genie. Yes; she was a genie in the girl class, and she scooped the dog man out of the wet, and flew him to an island. Then she told him what she was and how that she'd hit him to marry her just to see if his heart was all right. She said she was well pleased with him. But she was hot at his brothers, because of the free bath they'd given her, and she declared she'd have their lives.

Well, here the dog man told the genie that he'd begged his brothers off in spite of the way they'd treated him, and, like the old sheik, he laid emphasis on that so the genie'd take notice.

Well, the dog man's genie wife whisked him home and dropped him on the roof; and when he went down and opened the front door there were his brothers changed into those two black dogs. The dame said they'd have to stay dogs for five years, and then she disappeared. The five years were up now, and the dog man was looking for her to get them changed back.

That was the end of the old guy's story, and

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when he got through the genie said, "Well, that's about the bummiest brace of fairy tales I ever heard, but this merchant mug's had to take them, too, and that about evens me up with him."

So he pardoned the merchant for knocking his kid's eye out and killing him, and the merchant and the two old marks thanked him; and they all took a drink on the merchant at the corner saloon, while the antelope held up a lamp-post, and the two dog brothers stayed outside and howled; and after that they all blew home.

## STORY OF THE HUNCHBACK

**S**AY, the story of that little humpback rather hit me. Well, there was a tailor in the Sultan of Cashjar's town, and he was sitting on his legs sewing up a swallowtail for some hot dog in society one day, when along came a little humpback guy with a sosh on, and backed into his shop and gave him a free sing-song all by himself; and he took his little humps home to dinner to kind of cheer up his wife.

I guess it was Friday. Anyway, the tailor's frou had mackerel for dinner, and the humpback got a bone in his neck and choked around for awhile and died. The tailor and his wife thumped him with both hands and tried to bring him back. But there was nothing stirring. They couldn't get the bone, and he lay back on his hump and made a tough-looking dead man.

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Well, his death threw a devil of a scare into the tailor. In those days when they stumbled on to a dead man in a guy's parlor, they generally touched the guy off on the end of a rope on suspicion. The tailor knew he had an elegant chance to swing if they found the humpback's corpse on him, so he had no use for the corpse. It was no desirable corpse to have.

So he and his wife piled down to 42d Street after dark that night and hung the humpback on a Jew doctor's door-knob. The dame sat on the corpse at the foot of the steps till the tailor rang the bell and gave the girl an X, and told her to tell the doc to get a move on and come down and wait on the sick man, and then they boosted it up the steps into the doorway, and pulled their freight.

When they were sprinting down the row, the tailor said: "I wonder how the doc will like that humpback's corpse. Well, he can have him. I don't want him."

The Jew doc thought he had a big case, with a down-hill drag, when he got the ten, and he rushed out in the dark; and he didn't do much



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## STORY OF THE HUNCHBACK

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to the humpback but hand him a head-on collision, and skate him down the steps on his face. Then when the girl chased out with the light and the doc got a peep at the little humpback mug — and he was no beauty, you can gamble — he thought he killed him, and he was considerably flurried.

Well, he had no more use for the corpse than the tailor did; and so he dragged it inside, and he and his frou took it up on the roof and dropped it down the chimney of the man next door. They let his humps down with ropes under his arms, and left him standing up in the other mug's fireplace, looking just like he owned the house. Maybe that wasn't an expert move, eh?

The man next door was a Mohammedan, named Micky Mustapha, and when the Jew doc was putting down the skylight, he says to his wife: "I guess that's a josh on Mick. I wouldn't slough a corpse off on a man that way if I could help it. But it's every skate for himself around here."

Well, Micky Mustapha blew in from a wedding about 11 p. m. He was carrying a lantern,



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and he spotted the humpback right away, and thought he was a burglar. So he grabbed up a chunk of wood and fetched his humps a swipe on the nut, and flattened him out. Then he touched him up with a few more whacks as he lay on the floor.

"Oh, I don't know," he said. "I think I've stopped one burglar in the preliminary go."

But when he tumbled that the humpback was a dead, dried, and desolate corpse, he wasn't so happy; because he got the Jew doc's idea he killed him.

Well, he wasn't in so much need of a corpse, either; so he scoops the humpback up, does the grand-stand sneak down the street, stands him up in front of a millinery store, and slides home.

"I guess that little humpback's corpse will look well in a bonnet," he says when he gets back.

Well, the next bird to draw a chance on the humpback's remains was a clothing man, a Christian, who had been out on a toot all night, and was blowing down to a hammam. He lined up against the millinery store and jostled the corpse,

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and she fell over on him. He must have had a case of the nerves, because he just missed having a fit. He thought the corpse was trying to go through him; and he cut into it with both hands without waiting for the gong; upper-hooked it on the point after a few wild swings, and landed it in the gutter. Then he mounted on its collar and began to cave in its face; and he was tootling "Murder" and "Fire," like a woman with the hysteria, when the police blew up and pulled him off.

About that time he was in a good deal of trouble. That was no place for a Christian to get caught beating a Mussulman's corpse. He tried to tell the cops that the corpse held him up, but they asked him if he thought they were an easy bunch of grapes, and trotted him down to the coop and gave him a cell.

The next day the judges had him tried, ordered hanged, and up against it on the grandstand, where the rope was, by 8 o'clock, and there was a big mob of slobs there to see him do his wiggling, because they'd sent a nigger with a bell down the line to whoop the proceedings up

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with the announcement that they were going to stretch a Christian for doing a Mussulman. The clothing mark couldn't say he didn't kill the humpback because he didn't know: he was too full of booze and too much rattled.

Well, the sheriff had just pulled the cap down and reached for the button, when Micky Mustapha hopped up and stopped the circus. Micky's conscience hurt him. Yes, it worried him to see them hang the clothing man. And he made a clean breast of it and told them he killed the humpback. So they switched the rope to him, and started ahead again.

But right here the Jew doc cut in. He had conscience troubles, too. He told them all about how he shunted the humpback down the steps, and then played him off on Micky Mustapha; and he claimed the corpse as his own.

Well, they fired Micky Mustapha off the platform, and put the straps on the doc. The band started on a new tune, and the sheriff reached for the button once more; and then right there the tailor came rushing into the ring, whooping that he was the only original,

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authentic, registered, and certified slaughterer of the humpback. Oh, yes, Charlie; that was another case of conscience. The tailor had it worse than the others; it was out all over him in a rash.

The sheriff told him to get down on the floor and take a look at himself, but he insisted on reciting his troubles with the humpback, and when he got through, the judge said:

“You fellows didn’t work many old-fashioned bunco rackets with that corpse, did you? Well, I’d just as soon hang a tailor as anybody. Put the twine on him, Mike, and get this over. But, say, let’s have fifteen minutes’ recess for drinks first. This thing makes me dry.”

They were out to hang somebody, and it would have been up to the tailor after recess, good and strong sure, though it was his wife that deserved to be stretched, if anybody did, because she was the one who dished up the codfish to his humps. But the little humpback was the foreman of the Sultan of Cashjar’s funny men, and when old Cashjar was kicking because he didn’t show up that morning on time, some slob told him about

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the humpback's death, and what a devil of a lot of trouble they were having to get somebody hanged for killing him, and old Cashjar took an interest right off; and he stopped the hanging and had the whole shooting-match up to his place; and when he heard of the deal the humpback's corpse had been through, he slapped his knee and said that that was the best yarn he'd ever got out of the phonograph.

Well, that gang of goats were all story-tellers from the old farm, and they took the cue on the fly. Every one of them — the tailor and the Jew doctor and Micky Mustapha and the clothing man — jumped in on the spot and broke his neck trying to tell a better one; and they fetched in an old barber, named Silence, who was a crack-a-jack, and he coughed up a few; and old Cashjar enjoyed the choice collection of lies they sprung on him so much, he pardoned everybody offhand.

And, say, Charlie, his funny humps wasn't so very dead after all. Nit. And all the beatings he got didn't faze him.

When the lying seance was over, that old

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barber they brought in rubbed his neck with goose grease or something, and pulled the trout-bone out of it, and he got up and sneezed, and asked for a drink. Then his royal nobs had another spasm of joy, and gave everybody a pair of boots and a shirt-waist, and made the old barber veterinary to the Royal Horseguards or something; and the show was over.

## STORY TOLD BY THE TAILOR

**S**AY, that tailor had a pretty good yarn for old Cashjar. It was about a lame guy from Bagdad and that old barber they called Silence. The tailor and old Silence were at a dinner some place, and the lame boy from Bagdad blew in, got a look at the old barber, and flew out again; and then they hauled him back and made him tell what the trouble was. The first thing he did was to yell, "Silent! Silent! They call that old skate Silent! My Heavens! fellows, you ought to hear him talk."

Well, the lame boy said he was one of these women-haters, and whenever he met a bunch of women he turned down an alley to get away from them. He thought he had a plate-armored heart, with Bessemer steel trimmings, but of course it was coming to him, and one day he got it. He turned down the wrong alley — to

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avoid a W. C. T. U. procession or something — and sat down on a bench under a window where there was a potful of cabbage roses; and a girl opened the window to water the roses, and gave him a wink, and it was all off with him. She was one of the peachiest, and the wink did the work. Well, Charlie, he was hit so hard he went home sick and went to bed, and nobody could tell what was the matter with him, and he wouldn't give it away himself.

But after while one sharp old girl tumbled, and she said to him, "I'm on to your system, Billy; you've got love-troubles."

Well, he squealed then, and got the old dame to help him make love to the girl. But the girl was some old hot dog of a cadi's daughter, and she wouldn't look at him. Nit. She said he wouldn't do for her. She wanted a French count or an English lord, or some guy like that. But one day the old lady told her the young guy was dying, and turned her tears on and wept a lot; and the girl caved in, and said Billy could come call on her Sunday afternoon.

That fetched Billy back to life; and Sunday



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morning he jumped up and took a bath and sent for a barber, and they brought in that old skate Silence.

When old Silence gets in, he remarks that Billy looks pale, and then he asks the boy if he wants to be shaved or bled, which. The young guy gives him a look, and says, "I want a shave, you old mudhead. Do I look like I wanted to be bled?"

Old Silence fooled around a long time then; and got out a thing they called an astrolabe, and rolled out into the garden, and took the height of the sun. He came wobbling back, and said, "Say, Billy, I guess you'll be pleased when you hear this is Friday, the 18th of September, 653 years after Mohammed skipped from Mecca to Kansas City, and that Mercury is in cahoots with the Little Saucepan, and you can't hit a better day to be shaved. But if you don't take care you're going to have an accident. So look out for yourself."

That made Billy hot, and he howled, "Say, I didn't hire you for an astrologer. I want a shave; I have to go some place this afternoon.

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And I'll tell you one thing: if you don't take care you'll have an accident. See? "

Then the old skate said the boy oughtn't to get hot with him; because he wasn't just a plain barber. He said he was the swiftest barber in Bagdad; and a hot stuff doctor, chemist, astrologer, chiropodist, orator, logician, manicure, mathematician, historian, and massage expert. Besides that, he knew all about philosophy, and he was a poet and an architect. He patted himself on the liver-pad, and said, "What is it I ain't? There isn't anything I don't know. Your dad used to think a whole lot of me when he was alive; and just for his sake, Billy, I'll hook myself on to you now if you say the word."

And it took him about five minutes to get that off.

Billy had a laugh at the old mark's nerve then, and he said, "You're the swiftest talker I ever heard. But what I want to know is, are you going to quit ragging, and shave me? "

Old Silence got in then, and said he was insulted. He said he never talked, but that he had six brothers who were talkers from way

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back; and he went right along telling their names and all about them, regardless of time, tide, or tableware. The young fellow gave it up, then, and cut in and said to his secretary, "Give this slob three cases and take him away; and get me another barber — a deaf and dumb tongue-tied one."

But that didn't touch the old plug. He never batted an eyelid or moved a hoof. He said he'd come there to shave Billy, and was going to do it before he left; and he told how, when Billy's dad used to send for him, he used to sit down and charm him with his talk; and how Billy's pa used to say, "My eyes, you are the smartest guy I ever saw; Li Hung Chang and Emperor William and Oom Paul Kruger are nit compared to you;" and went on talking about something else till the young fellow threw up his arms, and said: "For the love of Heaven, let up, and go ahead. Didn't I tell you I have to go some place?"

Then even that didn't stop the old barber. He just switched off, and said, "Billy, you must be in trouble. I used to give your pop and

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your 'grandpop advice, and if you'll tell me what's up, I'll help you."

The young fellow jumped up then and swore if he didn't pull off the shave he'd heave him down-stairs. Well, that got his old barberlets started once more. He lathered the boy, and made two or three passes with the razor, and then he stopped again, and said, "You oughtn't to get hot so quick, Billy."

"Go on and shave me," says the young guy, "and don't talk so much."

Then old Silence offers to bet Billy he had business on his mind. The young skate remarked then that he told him that two hours before.

Well, old Silence gets the boy about half-shaved, and then he puts the razor down and freights the astrolabe out in the yard again, and takes another whack at the time. He comes waltzing back in about five minutes pleased as a house afire, and says, "I knew it, Billy, it's only half-past two. That's the best astrolabe ever I had."

That was too much for Billy. He went clear

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off his trolley, then, and he cursed that old skate to a standstill. He said, "You damn barber! You crazy, rattlebrained, half-baked old flubdub! If you don't get away from here quick, I'll drive you into the ground a mile."

But old Silence only said, "Sh! Sh! Billy. Don't get mad," and pushed him back in the chair, and went on shaving him.

But his old joblots couldn't keep quiet even then. Nit. He had to find out where the boy was going. Billy told him he was going to a dinner with some fellows. Then he said he had a dinner on, too, but had forgotten to order provisions, and the boy offered to give him all the grub in the house if he'd shut up. So, next thing, he wanted to see if the things would suit him; and Billy's cook carted up a lot of roast beef and chickens and wine and pudding from the cellar. After that, he laid off another quarter of an hour to look everything over.

That threw Billy into fit number two, and he cursed the old flubdub into the track the second time. Old Silence lasted about three ticks that heat, and then he stopped and began

## STORY OF THE TAILOR

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to do a two-step to show the young guy how a lot of his friends danced. That broke the boy's nerve, and he got up and finished the shave himself.

About that time, that old skate got it into his nut that he'd better go to the dinner-party with Billy. He was sure Billy would get into trouble without him. The boy tried to talk him out of it, but couldn't. Well, the boy didn't want to cave his face in, and he didn't want to tell him where he was going. So he tried to side-step him by sending him home with the chickens and stuff.

But old Silence tumbled, and lay for the boy around the corner, and when Billy was sliding into the cad's, the old guy came skipping down the alley.

He takes a seat by the pot of roses, and then waits for Billy. He was a nice old guy, that old barber. All he needed was killing.

Well, Billy has just time to give the girl the high handshake, when the old goat of a cad himself blows down the alley on a white mule, and goes in and gives one of his people a

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clubbing. The slob who got the clubbing howled like an Indian, and it hit that old barber all of a sudden then that they were assassinating Billy. So he hustled out of the alley and got all of Billy's people; and in about fifteen minutes there was a howling mob around there.

The cadí came out to see what the fracas was about, and old Silence howled, "You old dog robber. You spangle-eyed old flubdub. Where's Billy?" And he accused him of giving Billy the bastinado because he came to see the girl.

"Who's Billy?" said the cadí; but they ran over him, and chased into the house looking for the boy.

Well, Billy was listening to all the talk, and when he heard the mob coming he got into a trunk. Old Silence had Billy fixed in good shape then, and when the boy got the lid down he cussed the old guy to a finish. In about two minutes the old barber found Billy in the trunk, and he shouldered the box and waltzed downstairs with it, without saying anything.

Then, when he got right in the thick of the mob, the lid bounced off and the gang saw

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Billy. Well, the push gave the boy the serenade of his life on the spot. Billy couldn't stand for that, and he hopped out; and that hop cost him his lame leg.

He scooted down the avenue, and the gang took after him; and old Silence was in the lead, yelling, "Hold on, Billy! Hold on, Billy! If you knew how tough I felt when I thought the cadi had you. But I told you to take me along. If I hadn't shown up when I did, I guess you'd have been done. Hold on, Billy! Where are you going?"

The young guy had a mind to stop and kill the old barber then, but he went on till he got to a hotel where there was a porter he knew, and he gave the porter four dollars, and said to him, "For God's sake, smash that old barber when he gets here;" and then he flew out the back way.

Well, the porter nearly had a fight with old Silence to keep him out of the hotel. The old skate called him all sorts of names, and went away telling everybody he met what a good turn



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he'd done Billy to get him out of the cadis; and gave the whole snap away.

Well, the joshing Billy got was too much for him; so he skipped out of Bagdad without going to see the cadi's girl any more; and right there in Cashjar's town the first mark he bumps into is old Silence.

When the lame guy's story was done, he gave the old barber a face and jumped the dinner-party; and he took the next freight to Bagdad.

Then everybody at the dinner hopped on to old Silence on the spot. They all wanted to know what he meant. But all the old mark said was: "Yes; Billy gave you a straight talk, all right. But you fellows can see it would have been a wise play for him to take me along to that cadi's. I did the right thing by him every time, yet he says I'm a talker. Well, that shows what a mark gets for trying to help some guys."

## STORY TOLD BY THE MOHAMMEDAN

**M**ICKY MOHAMMED dumped a fair story on old Cashjar about a guy who wouldn't eat garlic. There was a lala of a garlic stew at a dinner Micky attended, and everybody filled up on it except the anti-garlic mark. He said he never ate garlic; not on his life!

But the skate who was giving the supper said, "You'll have to eat some of this, Jimmy, just for luck. My ten thousand dollar cook picked it fresh off the garlic-trees this morning, and this ragout is something for fair."

And he pressed him hard, and the gang all got in on the chorus what hot slops that stew was. So the mark finally got nervous and caved down the bank, and said he'd make a pass at the stew if he could wash a hundred and twenty times after he got through.

The boy giving the eat told there was no

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limit to the washing there. So he hit the stew. Then, when he finished his dish, he called for some benzine and a bucket of lye and two or three cans of carbolic acid, and fixed up a mix with that and scrubbed his fins.

The gang all sat around and watched his work, and when he came under the wire, some slob said there ought to be a good warm yarn behind all that; and he said, "You bet your boots there is," and pitched it at them.

The guy said: "I used to run a little jerk-water dry-goods store at Bagdad, when O'Herrin Alraschid was doing his first term as caliph, and I got struck with a swell dame that used to blow into my shop there. I used to go out to the big rag-shops for her and get her surah silks and moire antiques and a lot of stuff I didn't have in stock, and I used to get so rattled chinning with her and gazing into her starry eyes that I'd let her get away without squaring up, and have to stand good for the rags myself. But she always showed up and made good, and she gave me smiles that went down to my feet. I

## STORY OF THE MOHAMMEDAN

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was in love with her, all right, but I never had sand enough to make up to her.

“ But one day her hired man gave me a nudge and coughed up a haha, and pulled me aside and told me he could see I was dying for her. He said she was struck on me, and that all those moire antique plays were a blind, and that if I wanted to marry her it was up to me. Well, I fell over myself with delight when I heard that, and I said I was for her bigger than a wolf.

“ It turned out, though, that Maudie lived with O’Herrin Alraschid’s frou, and that dame said she’d have to take a look at me before she could hand us her blessing. If my mug suited her, the play went, she said; if not, it was off. Well, the only way to get next to Mrs. O’Herrin, so she could count over my points, was to steal a base on O’Herrin and wiggle into the women’s department of the palace on the sneak. So Maudie put up a job to fix that.

“ One day, when the plot was boiled up, her footman tipped me the wink, and that evening I hung around a mosque down by the river.

“ Pretty soon along comes Maudie with the

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footman and a bunch of porters and draymen and skates, and about forty trunks full of ladies' hats and fancy-goods and stuff. Maudie had the goods carted into the mosque, and when nobody was on, I slid into one that was empty; and then that gang threw the trunks into their dog-carts again, and freighted them up to the palace. I had a gaudy time in that Saratoga, the way those Indians bumped it around. I was standing on my neck about five-fourths of the time on the way up to O'Herrin's.

"Well, when we got to the palace, they rolled the trunks up-stairs, with Maudie heading the procession, and right at the first landing we bumped into the guy who kept the big front gate. Well, this slob of a night watchman got out his marking-pot and said that nothing went through the fence till he did the customs act on it, and gave it his cross in black paint; and he grabbed the trunk I was in and began to fool with the lock. Say, I think I took an interest about then. But Maudie made good. She ran a big sugar trust bluff on him and told him not to tire himself about a few trunksful

## STORY OF THE MOHAMMEDAN

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of girls' stockings, and some one in the gang said, 'Ah, rubber,' and he let us go.

"That was nice enough. But on the next landing, we fell right into the lap of old O'Herrin himself. When I jumped into that plot to bore my way into O'Herrin's cattery, the footman said I'd have to be game from the heart out if I wanted to pull through with my scalp; so I turned on my gameness right there.

"O'Herrin said, 'Holy smoke! Look at the trunks. What have you got here, Maudie? Gone into the show business?'

"Maudie said, 'Oh, no; I just got a few hat feathers and trimmings and stuff in those trunks — that's all.'

"'Oh! Is that all?' O'Herrin says. 'Well, let's see them.'

"'Goodness, gracious, Agnes; how you talk! Those things are for Mrs. O'Herrin,' Maudie says.

"'That's all right; open them up. I'm boss around here; not Mrs. O'Herrin,' O'Herrin says, swelling his voice up to make the bluff good.

"So Maudie had to make a show-down with

## HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS

those trunks. She had to chase them up and spring them all open.

“But she made a long, sad story of it. She opened them one by one, at the rate of three a week, and she kept O’Herrin fiddling with laces and shirt-waists and chip-hats for two solid hours. Still she couldn’t shake him off. Nit. He was the best stayer I ever saw, and if he’d been good for anything, the education he got in fancy goods then would have made him. I learned a good deal there myself.

“Maudie kept my box to the last, of course, but she got down to it in time, and then she balked. O’Herrin slid over to it and gave it a kick with his patent-leather, and said, ‘What sort of fried eggs have you got here, Maudie?’

“I was having trouble with my gameness then. My heart came into my neck and tried to choke me, and when I heard that little remark I put up my hands and quit. But Maudie didn’t. Not any. She swelled right up to the occasion. She was born for a tragic actress if the thrills she put on her voice then were any guide. She spread herself out, and said, ‘*That* trunk I *dare*

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not open without Mrs. O'Herrin's leave. If I showed what was in *that*, she would *never* forgive me.' Wow!

"Well, that fixed O'Herrin. He'd taken a good many chances already, opening thirty-nine trunks consigned to Mrs. O'Herrin, and his nerve wouldn't go any further; it had gone the limit. I respect him for the record he'd made as it was. He tried to swagger up and do another bluff, but he broke down and coughed in his neck, 'Never mind, Maudie, I'm in a hurry,' and pulled his freight; and then we were on Easy Street again.

"Well, we got past the rest of the lines all right, and the next day Maudie posted me and I went against Mrs. O'Herrin and came off with only a few corners missing. I told her I didn't drink, smoke, chew, play cards, or go to German picnics, and that I could be found at church whenever they had any. Well, she said I'd do, after a little fixing, and then O'Herrin countersigned the order, and they turned the wedding festivities on.

"It took ten days to marry us, and that was a



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horrible drill. I nearly died waiting for the curtain to drop — because I had a heap of love for Maudie, and I wanted to call her my own. Well, while I waited, I played thumbs-up-solitaire a good deal and trunned Maudie's Fido into a trained dog. The last night of the celebration came finally, and the last firecracker went off. Then Maudie and I were left alone.

“Well, gentlemen, that's where the garlic comes in. They had a garlic fricassee or something at the wedding that evening, and I got a good deal of it; and the flubdub of a waiter skipped me with the finger-bowls, and I wiped my hands on a napkin and let it go at that. I suppose there was an aroma of garlic sticking to me. Anyway, when I threw my arms around Maudie, she screwed up her face suddenly, and said, ‘What!’ and then she pushed me away, and yelled ‘Heavens! Garlic!’ and maybe she didn't get red in the face with rage.

“She asked me how much garlic I consumed a day, and if it was a health-food I approved, and a lot more stuff like that. I tried to explain, but she wouldn't have it. Nit. She rode

## STORY OF THE MOHAMMEDAN

her little horse around my neck like a three-ringed circus, and handed me all the side-dishes.

“When she was tired, she called in the night-watch and the head gardener and told them to chuck me out. They fired me into the avenue, and the cops pushed me on. The next day Maudie had a lot of show-bills, with big bright yellow letters, saying she was divorced, handed round, and that settled the cathop for me.

“And that taught me a lesson, fellows. I took an oath, then, never to throw any more garlic into myself when I could dodge it, and that if ever a lot of skates sicked me on it, when I couldn’t help myself, I’d do the bathe act a hundred and twenty times after I eat. Well, I’ve kept that oath, but I don’t ever expect to bump into another girl like Maudie.”

## THE BARBER'S BROTHER BACKBARAH

**T**HAT old barber Silence told a lot of hard-luck stories about his brothers. One of them was named Backbarah, and they called him Backy for short; and he didn't have any teeth. Fell down and stepped on himself or something when he was a kid, and knocked them out.

Well, one day when this guy was wondering where he was going to get his next square, an old dame came up and asked him if he wanted to do himself some good.

"Do I?" he said. "Just try me. I was just trying to guess whether I'd better commit suicide or get admitted to the orphans' home."

"Well, then," the old woman said, "there's a swell girl whose struck on you, and she asked me to fetch you to dinner. If you make a hit with her, she's likely to do lots for you. She's got a stand in with the grand vizier, and she'll

## **THE BARBER'S BROTHER BACKBARAH**

get you a job in the treasury or something good. But there's one thing you want to do when you're with her; you want to keep good-humored and let her have her own way. She's a josher, and she's liable to put up a few joshes on you. She's full of them. But she's a nice girl, and you want to take them all right and not get sore. I'm giving you this tip so you'll know how to act. If you get off your trolley, you'll lose everything."

"Oh, that's all right," Backy said. "If it's only a matter of joshes, I'll pull through them. You say she's struck on me, eh? That's great."

Backy was anxious to get along to the dinner; so the old dame steered him up to a palace and let him in through the gate, and took him into an inside court with a gallery running all around it and a garden in the middle of it.

"Say, this place is rich. This girl must be all right. I guess I'm right in it," Backy said to himself, when he got there.

The old lady gave him a seat in a swell chair, and then a good-looking young dame blew in with a bunch of girls who were laughing and

## HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS

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chinning like a yardful of magpies. The girls pulled a long face when they saw him, and the dame minced up and gave him a bow and a high handshake and asked him how he was.

Then after a lot of polite talk she asked him if he'd have dinner then or wait till he got it. He said he'd wait. So she ordered it in and gave him a seat opposite her with girls all around him.

Well, when Backy started to eat, the girls saw he had nit teeth, and they all laughed for further orders. He didn't know what the laugh was on, but he joined in to show he was a good fellow. While the eat was on, the dame kept telling him what a nice boy he was, whenever she could catch her breath from laughing. It was a good dinner, and Backy did the best he could with it for a toothless man.

After dinner the dame sat down on a sofa beside him and got pretty familiar, while the girls played a lot of music. The dame tickled him under the chin, and Backy swelled up and told himself that he'd made the crush of his life. But while he was telling himself this, she sud-

## **THE BARBER'S BROTHER BACKBARAH**

denly handed him a swat on the ear that nearly knocked him off the sofa.

That slap was no josh, and Backy got grumpy and took a seat in a rocker. But the old chaperon gave him a look to let him know he was missing his lines, and he went back to the sofa and pulled a grin and pretended that it was all right.

Then the dame began to pinch him, and the girls took a hand. One of them gave him a smash on the nose, and another one dragged his ears back, and another one pulled his hair, and the rest poked and batted him plenty. When they pushed him off the sofa, he got up and gave the old girl a look, and said, "I thought you said she was a nice girl."

"Oh, that's nothing. You can stand a little thing like that. Just let her go ahead, and it'll come to you good after awhile," the old dame said.

"Bub, you're all right," the young dame said. "You're a good-humored boy; you suit me." Then she ordered him sprinkled with rose-water

## HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS

and when they did that to him he felt better. That did him lots of good.

They had some more singing, and then the young dame told one of the girls to take Backy outside and have him fixed up like she'd told her.

Backy jumped up then, and said to the old dame, "What's up now? Got some more joshes coming? This is getting a little threadbare around the edges, mamma. I've got about enough."

But the old dame pulled him aside, and said, "Say, do you want to throw the whole thing now? Alice wants a little fun, that's all. She wants to have your whiskers shaved off and your eyebrows painted, and then she wants you dressed up like a woman. Are you going to buck at a little sport like that?"

"No; I'll do a good deal for Alice," Backy said. "She can have me painted and I'll stand for the petticoats and things, but you can't mow the lilacs."

"Oh, well, it's all off, then. If you say nit

## THE BARBER'S BROTHER BACKBARAH

to that, the whole thing's faded," the old woman said.

Backy thought awhile, and then he went along with the girl without saying anything. When they got his beard shaved and reached for his mustache, he pulled back, and said, " Here, here, I won't stand for that. That mustache is on the reserve list."

" Oh, you make me tired," the old dame said, and gave him a shove; and then he let them grab the mustache. As a full-grown lobster, he was it.

After that they painted him up a good deal with red paint, and took him into the young dame again. When she got a peep at him, she gave a whoop and fell off the divan, and she laughed till they had to pat her on the back to bring her to; and the rest of that female seminary laughed and howled itself sick. That made Backy kind of sore, but the old dame told him to look pleasant and get in the game.

The young dame helped herself up and said Backy had to dance with her; and then they all gripped him by the fins and danced around



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in a ring, laughing like they had bats in their garrets. When they got through with the dance, they all hopped on Backy again and gave him another bunch of slaps and batted him over the head till they knocked him down and he didn't know where he was at. They were a lot of gay girls, those; full of fun.

The old girl helped Backy to get up and get the hair out of his eyes when they were through, and then she said to him: "That's about all there is coming. You've only got to do one more thing. Alice is a great girl for races. You've got to go her three or four heats around this gallery; and you want to get down and catch her, because she's good on the sprint; and if you catch her, she'll think a heap of you. We'll fix you up with a bathing-suit so you'll be in trim to run, and when the race is over that'll wind things up. Now, get in and show what you can do on the track."

"Fix me up with a bathing-suit? How's that?" Backy asked.

"Yes; fix you up with a bathing-suit. We haven't any trunks. You've got to get down to

## THE BARBER'S BROTHER BACKBARAH

business. See? This girl can run, I'll tell you," the old dame said.

Well, Backy had too much stock in the investment to quit then, though he was a shine runner and he knew it. So he let them show him into a side-room; and he put on a green bathing-suit they gave him, and went into the race with the young dame.

She pinned up her skirt and took a forty-foot start, and, of course, the odds were all on her. They sprinted around the gallery about four times, while those girls yelled and laughed and giggled and clapped their hands like people with wheels; and then the dame scooted down a side hall with Backy after her.

That hall was dark and had two or three turns; and Backy had to slack up, and he lost sight of the dame. But he saw a light ahead, and he went for that.

Well, there was a door there, and he hustled through it, looking for the girl; and the door was slammed after him and locked, and he found himself in the street; and that's where Backy got ditched.

## **HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS**

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It was in the middle of the day, and he was right in the thick of a lot of drays and hacks and express wagons; and the hack-drivers and expressmen were sitting around chinning. He gave those guys a surprise, but they didn't do much to him when they got their breath back.

"Hello, Mike. When did they let you out?" they asked him. "Get on to the green mermaid." "Who painted your mug, Willie?" "How's the bathing down to the beach?" they yelled.

Well, they were a rough push, and when they got through joshing him, they put him on a donkey and went riding him around town, hooting like a lot of drunks. When they passed a judge's house he wanted to know what the row was about, and they told him Backy had tumbled out of the back door of the grand vizier's palace in the rig he wore, and that they saw him first.

Well, the judge was a grouty old mug, and he ordered Backy bastinadoed for disturbing the peace, and told him to leave town. But



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## **THE BARBER'S BROTHER BACKBARAH**

old Silence heard about it and sneaked Backy back.

Old Silence said that Backy was a fish, because he wasn't on to the way the ladies of the four amused themselves. But he said Backy got an education in that palace all right.

## THE BARBER'S BROTHER BACBAC

**O**LD Silence, the barber, had a brother named Bacbac or Buckback or something, and he was a blind skate. He was a beggar, and he worked the public for all he was worth. He had a great scheme of knocking at an office door, and not answering till somebody came to it.

One day he gave a knock at the door of a plumber or some guy like that, and the plumber said, "Come in," but he never answered him. The plumber hollered at him a half a dozen times, but he went on knocking, and never said a word. Then the plumber threw his soldering-iron down, and went and jerked the door open, and asked him what he wanted.

Then Buckback said: "I'm shy both lamps, and I haven't eat for a week. If you've got a quarter in your jeans it would give me a long boost."

## THE BARBER'S BROTHER BACBAC

"Are you deaf, too?" the plumber asked him.

"Nit," he said.

"All right," the plumber said. "Come along with me." And he took Buckback up seven flights of stairs to the top of the house. Then he said to him, "What did you say was the matter with you?"

"I've got two bum lamps," Buckback answered him.

"And what did you want?" he asked.

"I wanted a quarter to eat on," Buckback said.

"Oh!" the plumber said. "That's what's the matter, eh? Well, I can't do anything for you; haven't got a bean." And he sat down and began to whistle.

Then Buckback said: "Well, what in Sam Hill did you fetch me up here for? Why didn't you chuck that at me at the door?"

"And why, you old blind bunk, didn't you answer me when I howled for you to come in? What did you make me toddle to the door for?" the plumber said.



## **HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS**

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Well, Buckback couldn't answer that just then, and he said: "Well, what do I get here?"

"I've got nit for you, I tell you," the plumber said.

"All right. Give me a steer for the stairs, then," Buckback said.

"Not on your life," the plumber said. "There's the stairs. It's up to you to get down by your lonely. It'll teach you not to monkey with some people, maybe."

So Buckback had to plough his way downstairs alone, and he fell down eight times and cussed for further orders; and the plumber followed him, and gave him the big Minnehaha every time he hit the boards.

When he rolled out on the sidewalk, he bumped into two other blind marks he was in business with, and they dusted him off while he told them how the plumber salted him.

When they got through, he said: "Say, let's us go chew. The falls those stairs took out of me made me hungry enough to eat a dog. Let's blow down to my shack and eat there; and then we'll count over our dough. Eh?"

## THE BARBER'S BROTHER BACBAC

Well, the plumber was rubbering at those three bats, and when he heard this chin about dough, he said to himself, "Here's an opening for my life," and he fell into the blind man's parade and went down the line with those three blind guys to Buckback's house; and he sneaked in with them when Buckback opened the door.

When they got inside, Buckback locked the door, and said, "We'll have to see there's nobody here first;" and the whole blind push went to feeling around with their staffs.

For about a second, then, the plumber thought he was against it, and that he wasn't going to get away with his play. But there was no ceiling in the room, and he pulled himself up by a rope that was hanging down, and threw one leg over a joist; and he stayed up there while the investigation was going on. When it was over, he slid down, and he took the best chair in the house and got up to a table with Buckback and his partners.

Well, old Buckback got out three or four bags of coin then, and said to the other blind skates, "There was ten thousand plunks the last

## **HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS**

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time we took a count. You plugs can look these bags over now, and see if they're all right."

But the other blind guys said the bags were O. K., and that they knew he was on the square. Then they all took ten dibs apiece out of one of the sacks; and the plumber remarked to himself that he was a natural born reacher, and cribbed a handful.

Buckback put the coin away, and dug up a lunch after that. Well, the plumber sat next to him, and took the biggest piece of cheese and the ripest peach and most of the crackers and enjoyed himself. But he was one of these mugs who have to make a noise with their mouths when they eat, and right in the middle of the feast, when he was slobbering away like a farm-horse, Buckback caught on to him; and he nabbed him by the neck, and said:

"Well, you've got your nerve with you. There's somebody here, fellows." And he began to yell "Thieves," "Burglars," and "Hold-ups." And the whole blind push went for the plumber with their fists.

Well, he had his eyes with him, and they

## THE BARBER'S BROTHER BACBAC

didn't. So he gave Buckback a left uppercut and the other pair a couple of swift punches and pushed them away. But they were a game bunch of blind men, and they stayed right with him. It was a pretty mill for awhile, and that plumber needed his eyes all right.

It was going in good style when the police and the neighbors came and broke in the door. When that happened, the blind men were tooting "Thieves" like a man selling fish. But that plumber was as foxy as they make them, and he was yelling "Thieves" as loud as anybody.

The three blind skates had hold of him, and they told the police he was there to skin them. But he had his eyes shut, and he said: "Say, you guys are a horrible set of liars. Gentlemen, I'm as blind as a bug. These skates are my partners, and this is a job to beat me out of my rights. This is the blind man's trust, and these marks want to break away from the contract. You don't want to let them give you a fill that way."

Well, the cops ran the whole shooting-match down to the police-court, and they told the judge

## **HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS**

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about the row. Then the plumber jumps in quick, and says:

“Judge, this outfit tried to give me the double cross, and I think I’ll just get in and throw the whole crowd down. We’re flimflammers. See? We took an oath never to give the thing away, but if you’ll promise to let me off, I’ll put you on to the whole snap. And there’s something in it for you. Don’t overlook that.”

Well, the judges were on the make then, a good deal like some of them are now, and this one took the tip, and said, “All right, Mike, fire away. I’ll see you through.”

Then the plumber opened his peepers. When the judge spotted that, he said, “Hey! What kind of a game is this? I thought you said you were blind.”

“That’s what I said a minute ago, but times have changed since Willie died,” the plumber said. “Now, Judge, I’ll tell you the whole story. This whole push has good eyes.”

Then he pointed at Buckback, and said, “That guy has the best eyes in this county.

## THE BARBER'S BROTHER BACBAC

But we work the blind graft to get into people's shacks and pinch the valuables. By being careful and working late we got ten thousand plunks herded together. To-day I wanted my twenty-five hundred, and these skates bucked. They were afraid I was going to pull out of the gang and blow on them. So they cut into me, and were putting me on the bum right when the cops waltzed in and saved my scalp. All I ask is my share of the dough; the rest ought to go to you. If you want to see these flubdubs open their eyes, give them a touch of the bastinado."

When he got through that spiel, Buckback and the two other blind goats set up a howl that his talk was a fake, and said he was the biggest liar on the records. They said hope to die they were blind. But the judge called them down.

He shouted, "What! You plugs got the nerve to tell me that? I'll make you sick plenty." Because he took the plumber's talk like a fish.

Then old Buckback howled, "That guy's worse than a train-robber."

But all he or his side-partners could say cut

## **HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS**

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no ice. The judge ordered them two hundred whacks with the bamboo, and told them to open their eyes quick.

Well, they got a beating that was a pippin. They couldn't open their lamps any more than a rubber doll. The judge looked on and got impatient, and told them to hurry; and the plumber said, "Well, you marks make me weary. Why don't you open your eyes? I've seen some bull-headed chumps, but you take the cookery. You won't have as much feet left as a catfish pretty soon."

Well, the judge nearly beat them to death; so the plumber cut in after awhile, and said, "It's no go, Judge. Those guys are too stubborn. They'd croak right on the spot before they'd blink an eyelid. You'd better let them up, and go and grab the stuff."

So the judge turned the three blind skates loose and ordered them out of town, and he gave the plumber twenty-five hundred dibs out of their dough, and kept the rest himself. Old Silence went and brought Buckback back home.

## THE BARBER'S BROTHER BACBAC

But Buckback never got even with the plumber, because that smooth mark blew out to St Paul or some place, and opened a hardware store there; and before he died he owned half the town.



## THE BARBER'S BROTHER ALCOUZ

**T**HAT old barber Silence's brothers were all lulus. They were a lot of half-baked flubdubs, and they were always against it. One of them was Alacoozif or something like that, and he was in the butcher business till he had trouble with a magician.

The magician had himself fixed up like a nice old man, and every day he blew into the butcher-shop and bought six pounds of liver or something.

He paid for his meat with brand-new money just out of the mint, and it looked so good to this guy Alacoozif, that he dumped it all into a box in the safe by itself. In about a month, he ran shy on mutton, and then he thought he'd take that nice old man's shiny dibs and go and buy a band of goats he knew about.

## THE BARBER'S BROTHER ALCOUZ

So he went to the safe for the dough. But when he got there the safelet was bare.

That's right, Mike. There was nothing in that box but leaves; nothing but leaves, darling. The magician had enchanted Alacoozif's eyesight, and passed a lot of round leaves on him.

Alacoozif tumbled how he'd been done, and it made him wild. But he was a thoroughbred flubdub all right. Instead of waiting till his wizardlets showed up again, and then giving him a bang with the cleaver and having him pulled, he went out in the middle of the sidewalk and wept and beat himself on the nut and told the whole town about it — all for about twelve dollars and six bits.

Well, while he was enjoying himself that way, who should blow down the row but the wizard, coming for some more liver. The minute Alacoozif piped him, he made a rush for him and grabbed him by the beard and roared: "Hah! I've got you now, old flimflams. This is the guy that worked those leaves on me, fellows. He got fat wolfing my liver, and I got nit for it — nit but a hatful of leaves."

## HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS

But for coolness that magician could give the iceman points. He never turned a hair. He said: "Say, gentlemen, this is the nerviest skate ever. Do you know what he's been doing? Instead of beef and mutton, he's been selling you people meat from dead men. That's right. There's a corpse hung up in his shop now. If you don't believe it, blow in and take a look."

Well, there was a mob bunched around Alacoozif and the wizard, and when they heard that, they snatched Alacoozif and rushed him into his shop; and, sure enough, there was a dead guy, with his throat cut, hanging on one of the hooks.

Alacoozif had dressed a goat and hung it up for mutton that morning, and the wizard had enchanted everybody's eyes so that the goat looked like a dead man. His wizardlets was very good in his line.

When the push saw the corpse, they soaked Alacoozif right and left, and yelled, "The dirty dog-stealing skate; poke in his face. He's been selling meat to us from dead guys for a year. That's why his meat's so tough. I nearly broke my jaw on one of his chops this morning." And

## THE BARBER'S BROTHER ALCOUZ

then they dragged him down to the judge's, and told the judge that he'd turned everybody in the seventh ward into cannibals; and they wanted the judge to lift his hair.

Well, Alacoozif gave the judge a song about those leaves, but the judge only winked the other eye, and said, "Give this bloke five hundred knocks with a club, and then chase him around town on a camel for three days." And that's the way they fixed Alacoozif.

The ride on that camel made him so seasick he couldn't eat for a week. Then the judge touched him for his butcher-shop, and ordered him to screw his nut for Philadelphia. That put him out of business right.

But Ally saved his dough, and when he was packing his grip to leave, an old dame came to the door and asked him for a basin of water to bathe her hands, so she could say her prayers. He told her to wash in the sink, and he was counting his roll when she got through with her prayers and came up and said she hoped his health was good or something.

The old girl looked kind of seedy, and Ala-

## **HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS**

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coozif offered her a V to help her along. But she got insulted, and said she worked for one of the richest girls in the city, and one of the best-lookers.

Well, Alacoozif wasn't married, and he said to the old dame, "Is she a nice girl?"

"My goodness, I should say she was," the dame said.

Then Alacoozif asked her if she could get him an introduction, and she said: "Sure. Come right along now. She'll marry *you* in a minute. Why, you'll just suit her; and you'll have the richest and best-looking wife west of Minneapolis."

Well, that Alacoozif was a number one fish, as I said. He swallowed that fill like a goat eats a tin can. He stuffed the roll in his pocket and wriggled into a clean collar, and went away with the dame in a hurry.

She took him to a big house, and a cross-eyed Greek opened the gate and let them in. Then she gave him a seat in a drawing-room full of fine furniture, and went to dig up the girl. The furniture was so rich it hit Alacoozif that he was

## THE BARBER'S BROTHER ALCOUZ

up against something good. So he had a grin on like a drunken Indian when the girl came in.

Well, she was a plenty good-looker and a pleasant talker; and she sat down and chinned with Alacoozif for an hour. She got all the news out of him, and then she got up, and said, "Excuse me; I'll be back in a minute," and went out.

While she was gone then, Alacoozif thought what a nice girl she was, and he was swelled up a little by his luck. So when he heard the door open again, he put on his killingest face and looked up with a sweet, sweet smile.

But it wasn't the dame. Nit. It was a big coon, and he had a skimiter in his paw. He gave Alacoozif a scowl that froze his knees, and the way the smile faded from that guy's face was a first-class show.

The nig yelled, "What are you doing around here? "

Alacoozif said, "Nothing much," and started for the door, but he never got there. The coon caught up to him; gave him three or four pokes and a swipe over the nut with the skimiter,

## **HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS**

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and stretched him. Then the coon went through his clothes and took his dough, and the old woman blew in and dragged him by the heels to a trap-door, and pitched him down among a lot of dead men. The nig and the old dame thought he was done for, and they put him where they'd put all the other guys they'd worked that panel game on.

But Alacoozif came to after while, and he tumbled to the kind of a place that was. His wounds had nearly fixed him, and so he stayed in that cellar two days for fear the nig would get him if he poked his nose out. Then he sneaked out in the night and hid in the yard, and in the morning, when the old dame opened the gate to go and cop out another sucker, he slid out after her.

Well, he went and lived a month with old Silence, the barber, then, and got well. Then, after he punched the bag for a week or two to get into training, he said to old Silence, "Well, Billy, I'll just go out and get square with that outfit now, in style."

So he dressed himself up like an old woman;

## THE BARBER'S BROTHER ALCOUZ

put two or three bunches of keys in his pocket to make a jingle; hid a skimiter under his wrapper; and blew down-town looking for the old girl who steered him against the nig with the skinning-knife.

He had no trouble finding her. She was doing business at the old stand, and he wobbled up to her and gave the keys a rattle, and said: "I beg your pardon. I just blew in from Kalamazoo, and I'm looking for a bank. Could you bump me into one? It'll be a great favor, I'm sure."

The old dame bustled her feathers up right off, and said, "You couldn't have tripped over a better guide. I'm Hattie Green. I own a few banks, and I've got a stand in with all the rest. Catch the step, and I'll chase you down to the First National. They'll do your business."

Alacoozif said to himself, "Yes; I guess they will; but not on this occasion, Susie," and he went with the old girl to the house where she took him before.

She said she lived there, and had to get a wrap because it was getting chilly, and she left



## HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS

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him in the sitting-room and went out for the nigger.

Well, the coon blew in and asked Alacoozif to come into the next room; the coon didn't want the blood on the carpet there. So Alacoozif got up, and when the moke turned around to go out, he pulled the skimiter from under his apron and gave him a chop across the collar-button; and that bisected him pretty.

The cross-eyed Greek heard the nig hit the floor and supposed Alacoozif was ready for the trap; and he waltzed in to help the old girl drag out the remains. Well, Alacoozif soaked him the minute he showed up and spread him out in halves. Then the old dame came hiking in; and that's where feminine curiosity got her into it good.

Alacoozif grabbed her; snaked off his veil and bonnet, and said, "Ah, there, old mother Bender. Do you remember me?"

The old dame's teeth began to chatter, and she said, "I remember, I remember —"

"Oh, let go. Don't make a song of it. But you know me, Maud?" Alacoozif said.

## THE BARBER'S BROTHER ALCOUZ

The dame said nit, she never saw him; and her teeth went right on chattering.

"Well," Alacoozif said, "I'm the guy whose house you did all that praying in about six weeks ago, after you washed your paws in the sink. My name was Alacoozif then. But I was the village cut-up for awhile after that nig got through with me. I hate to hit a woman, even with an axe; but I'm going to make some hamburger steaks out of you."

Well, the old dame cried lots, but Alacoozif cut her up fine so he'd have no trouble feeding her to the hogs. After that, he slid into the other room and found the girl. She nearly dropped through the floor when she saw him.

But she didn't lose her nerve. Nay, nay, Josie. She gave Alacoozif a great fill about how the coon forced her to help run that joint, and it's a fact he let her off — like the mudhead he was.

But that dive had done a good business and was full of money, and the girl was very, very anxious to show Alacoozif where the stuff was. There was a dozen boxes of gold, and she said

## HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS

to him, "Now, run away, Ally, and get a lot of drays and haul it off; and you'll be richer than Astor."

Well, this Alacoozif was a fish, as I remarked, and he went after the dray; and while he was gone the girl scooped everything and slid; and when he got back there wasn't a nickel on the place.

"Well, I'll get something," he said, and grabbed the furniture.

But the police pulled him and took him before that old judge again, and the judge said, "What! What! Are you in town yet, Willie?"

Then Alacoozif told the judge all about the nig's joint and laid it on thick. But the judge took the furniture away from him and gave him a half an hour to get away from there, and he had to skip; and old Silence had to send a postal-order after him so he could eat till he got a job. Oh, Ally was a flubdub all right.

## THE GRECIAN KING AND THE PHYSICIAN DOUBAN

**T**HAT Micky the Greek who was King of Persia once bumped into it when he turned down that Doctor Douban or Reuben — I guess it was Reuben, from the job he put up on himself — who did him so much good when he had the leprosy.

The Greek king had leprosy so bad they wouldn't have him at the pest-house. He doctored at Carlsbad and everywhere, and had all kinds of doctors, and they all gave him up. The Christian Scientists and the Faith Cure push and everybody else took a whiz at him; but they couldn't touch him, and they all quit him cold and pulled their freight for home. Then they fetched on Doctor Dugan — no, Douban — just to ease his mind and make him die easy.

Dugan was all right for a doctor; he'd studied

## HARDIN'S ARABIAN NIGHTS

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medicine in Greek, Persian, Turkish, Choctaw, Arabian, Portuguese, Latin, Syriac, Hebrew, and — oh, yes, Irish, and he had a new system. See?

Well, when he floated in, the grand vizier said: "Reuben, Reuben, I've been waiting —"

"Ah, come off. What's the troub?" Douban says.

Then they sicked him on to his Greek noblets, and he said he could fix the leprosy easy. He chased a croquet mallet with a hollow handle out of his grip, and he filled the hollow with medicine. Then he said to the king:

"Here. Take this and go play croquet. When you get a heat on, quit and take a bath. It will do *you* good. Get rubbed down then and go to bed. To-morrow you'll be O. K."

His Greek kinglets played the tip, and the next day there was no leprosy in that county. He had a skin like a two-year-old, and his toes began to grow out again, and he felt good.

Well, he wanted to do enough for Dugan. So he made him a favorite — gave him four thousand plunks every day and a seat at his own

## THE PHYSICIAN DOUBAN

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table, and gave him a fine silk robe every night and helped him put it on; and patted him on the back before the whole push, and said he was the hottest doctor ever.

That was nice for Dugan. But there was a jealous slob of a grand vizier around there, and every time he saw Dugan get his four thousand dibs from the paying teller it nearly made him sick. So he gets the king on the quiet, and tells him he's wasting his money on Dugan.

"What are you giving us?" the king said.

"Well, I'm giving you this," the G. V. said. "That skate is a bad oyster. He never left Ireland and came here for his health, nor to pick up a few plunks. He's here to get you."

"Say, what's the matter with you? I think you're full of prunes," the king said. "If he wanted to do me, why didn't he leave me with the leprosy when I had it? I had plenty of it; and it nearly had me fixed; I'd have been dead by July. If he wanted to get me, he wouldn't have cured me up, would he?"

"But you'll break out again," the main skate said. "That cure doesn't last."

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"Oh, I don't know. You're down on this guy, and you're trying to get him fixed like the married woman did the parrot," said the king.

"How is that?" the G. V. asked.

"Well, there was a travelling man who left a parrot to watch his wife's curves, and the parrot told him about her going to dances while he was gone, and he called her down. The dame thought one of the servants had sprung aleak. But she tumbled it was the parrot. So one night, when the drummer was out of town, she had the coachman work a coffee-mill under the parrot's cage and the chambermaid sprinkle him with water and the cook turn flashlights on him with a mirror and a candle, and they kept that circus up about half the night. That was to fool his birdlets a little.

"The next day the drummer asked the parrot, 'Well, what happened last night?' and the parrot said, 'There was just a hell of a storm. It rained and thundered for further orders, and the lightning kept me awake till morning.'

"Well, the drummer knew that was a shine,

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and he concluded the parrot was a big liar from the beginning; so he wrung his neck and threw him into the alley. But he found out afterward from the neighbors that the parrot was all right. I don't propose to have you skin me that way." the king said.

But the grand vizier wasn't sidetracked by that. Nit. He said, "Oh, well, a parrot isn't much, and I don't believe that guy wore crêpe very long for his. But, supposing this mark Dugan is all right, what's killing a doctor? You're a king; you oughtn't to take any chances. Anyway, this is on the level. If you find me crooked, you can dish it up to me like a king I used to know out in Kansas did to his grand vizier."

"What did the Kansas man's main skate do?" the king asked.

"Well, this king turned the young prince over to the grand vizier, and told the G. V. to stay with the kid all the time and keep bunks off of him, and so forth; and the G. V. promised to do it. But one day when the prince was hunting, the G. V. squatted down in a shady place and



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let him go lose himself. And while the prince was bumming up and down the woods yelling for the main skate, he bumped into a good-looking dame who was doing a cry. The girl said she was the daughter of an Indian king.

“‘Chickasaw, Choctaw, or Sioux?’ the prince said. ‘Sioux,’ the dame said, and then she told him she’d been taking a horseback ride and had gone to sleep and fallen off, and the horse had moved on, and it was a long ways home. Well, his princelets took her up behind him and started for her shack, and when they reached an old broken-down house she got off and went inside, and he heard her say, ‘Come, kids, be happy. I’ve a nice young guy for your dinner — a fat one;’ and then a lot of kids said, ‘Goody, mamma.’

“Then it struck his royal nobbs that the dame was no Pocahontas at all, but one of these ogresses, and he rolled his hoop out of there quick; and when he got home he told the Kansas king about the G. V.’s letting him get lost, and the chances he’d been taking with the ogress.

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So the king had the main skate hunted up and smothered right off.

"Now, what I want to say is that I'm watching this game for you closer than that. This mark Dugan's medicine may strike in next week, and then it'll be all off with you."

Well, that Greek king was shy on sense, naturally; most kings are, except those in the poker deck; and he said, "Well, I guess you're right. I don't need Dugan any longer, anyway, and it'll be just as well to kill him." So he sent for Dugan, and when Dugan walked up to the desk, he said, "Reuben, do you know why I hit the bell for you?"

"Nit," said Dugan.

"Well, Dugan, I sent for you to take your life," the king said.

Dugan was paralyzed, and he yelled, "What for? What did I do?"

"Well," the king said, "I got it on good authority" (and that was a grand-stand bluff, because that grand vizier was the biggest liar on earth) "that you came here to get me, and I've concluded to stop you right now."

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Then the king said to the squeeze who worked the chopper, "Hit him with the axe."

Dugan made a great talk then to get away. But that Greek king was stubborn as a mule. He kept saying, "Nit. Nit. I can't have you around any longer. A mark who can cure leprosy like you can is dangerous." That king was a bird.

So they blindfolded Dugan and tied his hands and put him on his knees, and the man with the axe got ready.

Then Dugan stopped them; and he said to the king, "Hold on a minute; I got something to tell you;" and he told the king that he had a book that was a wonder, and asked him if he couldn't go home and make his will and leave it to him.

"What's the book good for?" the king wanted to know; and Dugan told him it was good for a whole lot of things, but that there was one thing that ought to hit the king where he lived. He said that if, after they'd chopped his head off, the king would turn to page 'steen

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and read line seven, the head would answer any question he could ask.

“Holy smoke! Well, I’m for that book, then,” the king said; and he sent Dugan home to make his will, and fetched him back with the book the next day.

Well, the push had got on that something good was coming, and all the emirs and grand viziers and vice-grands and boss eunuchs and floor-walkers were there when Dugan arrived.

Dugan walked up with the book, and said: “After my head’s off, put it in a basin and open the book. The blood’ll stop, and then you can fire away with your questions. But before you give the order to carve me, I want to say for the last time that I never intended to do a thing to you. On the level, that’s straight; and I think you ought to drop this thing.”

“Oh, you’re too late with that chin now,” the king said. “I’d have to take your head off now just to hear it talk, if there wasn’t any other reason. You don’t suppose I’d miss this thing, do you?”

Then his joblots gave the order, and they

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soaked Dugan with the axe and his head fell in the basin. They set the head up, and the king picked up the book. The bleeding stopped, and the head opened one eye and gave the king a wink. It opened the other eye, and said:

"Well, what'll you have? Beefsteak and onions, veal cutlets breaded, liver and bacon —"

"Hold on! Hold on!" the king said. "Wait till I get the page."

The pages were stuck together, and the king moistened his fingers with his tongue, and began turning them over one by one; and there's where he took the trolley for the bad lands.

That book was fried in strychnine, or rough-on-rats or something, and every time his royal knocks put his finger to his mouth he got a little. See?

The head watched him with one of these oh-you'll-be-sorry grins, and when he got over to page 'steen there wasn't anything there.

"Move on a little; I must have missed the page," the head said.

So the king went on till he came to page twenty-three, and then he went into convulsions

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and pitched out of the throne on his nut. At that, Dugan's head said:

"Haha, haha! Now, will you be good? See what happens these flubdubs of kings who think they can bump everybody off the road whenever they feel like it? You put the boss leprosy doctor out of business, all right, old man, but that's your last play, I guess. This will do for you, I think."

Well, the king had fifteen spasms; tried to make the sixteenth; missed his reach, and croaked. Then Dugan's head gave the push a glare and went out of business. That was great, eh, Charlie?



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